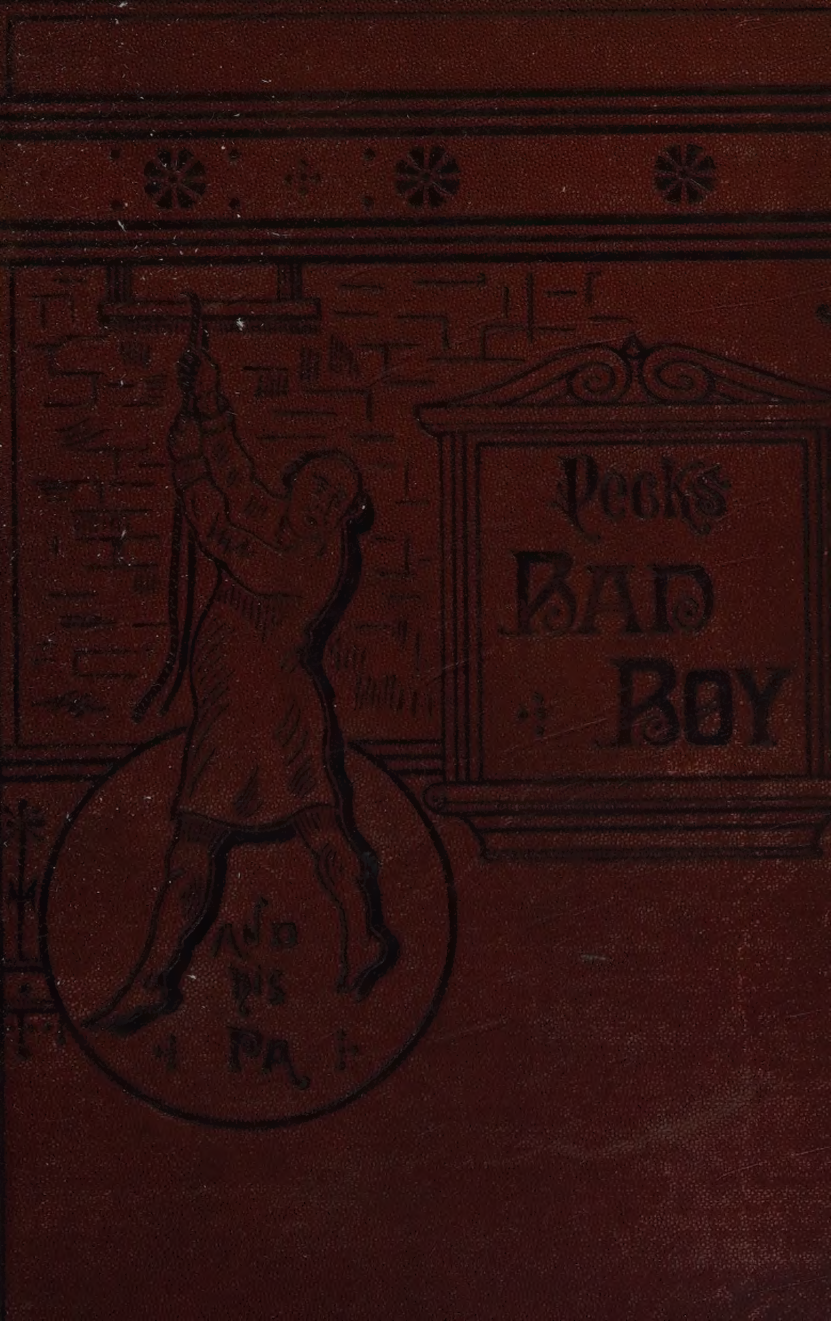
Peck's
BAD
BOY
AND
HIS
PA

HUNTING FOR THE BAD BOY.

PECK'S

BAD BOY

AND HIS PA.

By GEO. W. PECK,
Author of "Peck's Fun," "Peck's Sunshine," and Editor "Peck's Sun.'

With Illustrations by Gean Smith.

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A CARD FROM THE AUTHOR.

OFFICE OF "PECK'S SUN,"
Milwaukee, Feb., 1883.

BELFORD, CLARKE & CO.:

GENTS—If you have made up your minds that the world will cease to move unless these "Bad Boy" articles are given to the public in book form, why go ahead, and peace to your ashes. The "Bad Boy" is not a "myth," though there may be some stretches of imagination in the articles. The counterpart of this boy is located in every city, village and country hamlet throughout the land. He is wide awake, full of vinegar, and is ready to crawl under the canvas of a circus or repeat a hundred verses of the New Testament in Sunday School. He knows where every melon patch in the neighborhood is located, and at what hours the dog is chained up. He will tie an oyster can to a dog's tail to give the dog exercise, or will fight at the drop of the hat to protect the smaller boy or a school girl He gets in his work everywhere there is a fair prospect of fun, and his heart is easily touched by an appeal in the right way, though his coat-tail is oftener touched with a boot than his heart is by kindness. But he shuffles through life until the time comes for him to make a mark in the world, and then he buckles on the harness and goes to the front, and becomes successful, and then those who said he would bring up in State Prison, remember that he always *was* a mighty smart lad, and they never tire of telling of some of his deviltry when he was a boy, though they thought he was pretty tough at the time. This book is respectfully dedicated to boys, to the men who have been boys themselves, to the girls who like the boys, and to the mothers, bless them, who like both the boys and the girls.

Very respectfully,

GEO. W. PECK.

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PECK'S BAD BOY.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOY WITH A LAME BACK.

THE BOY COULDN'T SIT DOWN—A PRACTICAL JOKE ON THE OLD MAN—A LETTER FROM "DAISY"—GUARDING THE FOUR CORNERS—THE OLD MAN IS UNUSUALLY GENEROUS—MA ASKS AWKWARD QUESTIONS—THE BOY TALKED TO WITH A BED-SLAT—NO ENCOURAGEMENT FOR A BOY!

A YOUNG fellow who is pretty smart on general principles, and who is always in good humor, went into a store the other morning limping and seemed to be broke up generally. The proprietor asked him if he wouldn't sit down, and he said he couldn't very well, as his back was lame. He seemed discouraged, and the proprietor asked him what was the matter. "Well," says he, as he put his hand on his pistol pocket and groaned, "There is no encouragement for a boy to have any fun nowadays. If a boy tries to play an innocent joke he gets kicked all over the house." The store keeper asked him

what had happened to disturb his hilarity. He said he had played a joke on his father and had been limping ever since.

"You see, I thought the old man was a little spry. You know he is no spring chicken yourself; and though his eyes are not what they used to be, yet he can see a pretty girl further than I can. The other day I wrote a note in a fine hand and addressed it to him, asking him to meet me on the corner of Wisconsin and Milwaukee streets, at 7:30 on Saturday evening, and signed the name of "Daisy" to it. At supper time Pa he was all shaved up and had his hair plastered over the bald spot, and he got on some clean cuffs, and said he was going to the Consistory to initiate some candidates from the country, and he might not be in till late. He didn't eat much supper, and hurried off with my umbrella. I winked at Ma but didn't say anything. At 7:30 I went down town and he was standing there by the post-office corner, in a dark place. I went by him and said, "Hello, Pa, what are you doing there?" He said he was waiting for a man. I went down street and pretty soon I went up on the other corner by Chapman's and he was standing there. You see, he didn't know what corner "Daisy" was going to be on, and had to cover all four corners. I saluted him and asked him if he hadn't found his man yet, and he said no, the man was a little late. It is a mean boy that won't speak to his Pa when he sees him standing on a corner. I went up street and I saw Pa cross over by the drug store in a sort of a hurry,

and I could see a girl going by with a water-proof on, but she skited right along and Pa looked kind of solemn, the way he does when I ask him for new clothes. I turned and came back and he was standing there in the doorway, and I said, "Pa you will catch cold if you stand around waiting for a man. You go down to the Consistory and let me lay for the man." Pa said, "never you mind, you go about your business and I will attend to the man."

Well, when a boy's Pa tells him to never you mind, and looks spunky, my experience is that a boy wants to go right away from there, and I went down street. I thought I would cross over and go up the other side, and see how long he would stay. There was a girl or two going up ahead of me, and I see a man hurrying across from the drug store to Van Pelt's corner. It was Pa, and as the girls went along and never looked around Pa looked mad and stepped into the doorway. It was about eight o'clock then, and Pa was tired, and I felt sorry for him and I went up to him and asked him for half a dollar to go to the Academy. I never knew him to shell out so freely and so quick. He gave me a dollar, and I told him I would go and get it changed and bring him back the half a dollar, but he said I needn't mind the change. It is awful mean of a boy that has always been treated well to play it on his Pa that way, and I felt ashamed. As I turned the corner and saw him standing there shivering, waiting for the man, my conscience troubled me, and I told a policeman to go and tell Pa that "Daisy" had been sud-

denly taken with worms, and would not be there that evening. I peeked around the corner and Pa and the policeman went off to get a drink. I was glad they did cause Pa needed it, after standing around so long. Well, when I went home the joke was so good I told Ma about it, and she was mad. I guess she was mad at me for treating Pa that way. I heard Pa come home about eleven o'clock, and Ma was real kind to him. She told him to warm his feet, cause they were just like chunks of ice. Then she asked him how many they initiated in the Consistory, and he said six, and then she asked him if they initiated "Daisy" in the Consistory, and pretty soon I heard Pa snoring. In the morning he took me into the basement, and gave me the hardest talking to that I ever had, with a bed slat. He said he knew that I wrote that note all the time, and he thought he would pretend that he was looking for "Daisy," just to fool me. It don't look reasonable that a man would catch epizootic and rheumatism just to fool his boy, does it? What did he give me the dollar for? Ma and Pa don't seem to call each other pet any more, and as for me, they both look at me as though I was a hard citizen. I am going to Missouri to take Jesse James's place. There is no encouragement for a boy here. Well, good morning. If Pa comes in here asking for me tell him that you saw an express wagon going to the morgue with the remains of a pretty boy who acted as though he died from concussion of a bed slat on

the pistol pocket. That will make Pa feel sorry. O, he has got the awfulest cold, though."

And the boy limped out to separate a couple of dogs that were fighting.

CHAPTER II.

THE BAD BOY AT WORK AGAIN.

THE BEST BOYS FULL OF TRICKS—THE OLD MAN LAYS DOWN THE LAW ABOUT JOKES—RUBBER-HOSE MACARONI—THE OLD MAN'S STRUGGLES—CHEWING VIGOROUSLY BUT IN VAIN—AN INQUEST HELD—REVELRY BY NIGHT—MUSIC IN THE WOOD-SHED—"'TWAS EVER THUS."

Of course all boys are not full of tricks, but the best of them are. That is, those who are the readiest to play innocent jokes, and who are continually looking for chances to make Rome howl, are the most apt to turn out to be first-class business men. There is a boy in the Seventh Ward who is so full of fun that sometimes it makes him ache. He is the same boy who not long since wrote a note to his father and signed the name "Daisy" to it, and got the old man to stand on a corner for two hours waiting for the girl. After that scrape the old man told the boy that he had no objection to innocent jokes, such as would not bring reproach upon him, and as long as the boy confined himself to jokes that would simply cause pleasant laughter, and not cause the finger of scorn to be pointed at a parent, he would

be the last one to kick. So the boy has been for three weeks trying to think of some innocent joke to play on his father. The old man is getting a little near sighted, and his teeth are not as good as they used to be, but the old man will not admit it. Nothing that anybody can say can make him own up that his eyesight is failing, or that his teeth are poor, and he would bet a hundred dollars that he could see as far as ever. The boy knew the failing, and made up his mind to demonstrate to the old man that he was rapidly getting off his base. The old person is very fond of macaroni, and eats it about three times a week. The other day the boy was in a drug store and noticed in a show case a lot of small rubber hose, about the size of sticks of macaroni, such as is used on nursing bottles, and other rubber utensils. It was white and nice, and the boy's mind was made up at once. He bought a yard of it, and took it home. When the macaroni was cooked and ready to be served, he hired the table girl to help him play it on the old man. They took a pair of shears and cut the rubber hose in pieces about the same length as the pieces of boiled macaroni, and put them in a saucer with a little macaroni over the rubber pipes, and placed the dish at the old man's plate. Well, we suppose if ten thousand people could have had reserved seats and seen the old man struggle with the India rubber macaroni, and have seen the boy's struggle to keep from laughing, they would have had more fun than they would at a circus. First the old delegate at-

tempted to cut the macaroni into small pieces, and failing, he remarked that it was not cooked enough. The boy said his macaroni was cooked too tender, and that his father's teeth were so poor that he would have to eat soup entirely pretty soon. The old man said, "Never you mind my teeth, young man," and decided that he would not complain of anything again. He took up a couple of pieces of rubber and one piece of macaroni on a fork and put them in his mouth. The macaroni dissolved easy enough, and went down perfectly easy, but the flat macaroni was too much for him. He chewed on it for a minute or two, and talked about the weather in order that none of the family should see that he was in trouble, and when he found the macaroni would not down, he called their attention to something out of the window and took the rubber slyly from his mouth, and laid it under the edge of his plate. He was more than half convinced that his teeth were played out, but went on eating something else for a while, and finally he thought he would just chance the macaroni once more for luck, and he mowed away another fork full in his mouth. It was the same old story. He chewed like a seminary girl chewing gum, and his eyes stuck out and his face became red, and his wife looked at him as though afraid he was going to die of apoplexy, and finally the servant girl burst out laughing, and went out of the room with her apron stuffed in her mouth, and the boy felt as though it was unhealthy to tarry too long at the table and he went out.

Left alone with his wife the old man took the rubber macaroni from his mouth and laid it on his plate, and he and his wife held an inquest over it. The wife tried to spear it with a fork, but couldn't make any impression on it, and then she see it was rubber hose, and told the old man. He was mad and glad, at the same time; glad because he had found that his teeth where not to blame, and mad because the grocer had sold him boarding house macaroni. Then the girl came in and was put on the confessional, and told all, and presently there was a sound of revelry by night, in the wood shed, and the still, small voice was saying, "O, Pa, don't! you said you didn't care for innocent jokes. Oh!" And then the old man, between the strokes of the piece of clap-board would say, "Feed your father a hose cart next, won't ye. Be firing car springs and clothes wringers down me next, eh? Put some gravy on a rubber overcoat, probably, and serve it to me for salad. Try a piece of overshoe, with a bone in it, for my beefsteak, likely. Give your poor old father a slice of rubber bib in place of tripe to-morrow, I expect. Boil me a rubber water bag for apple dumplings, pretty soon, if I don't look out. There! You go and split the kindling wood." 'Twas ever thus. A boy cant have any fun now days.

CHAPTER III.

THE BAD BOY GIVES HIS PA AWAY.

PA IS A HARD CITIZEN—DRINKING SOZODONT—MAKING UP THE SPARE BED—THE MIDNIGHT WAR-DANCE—AN APPOINTMENT BY THE COAL BIN.

THE bad boy's mother was out of town for a week, and when she came home she found everything topsy turvey. The beds were all mussed up, and there was not a thing hung up anywhere. She called the bad boy and asked him what in the deuce had been going on, and he made it pleasant for his Pa about as follows:

"Well, Ma, I know I will get killed, but I shall die like a man. When Pa met you at the depot he looked too innocent for any kind of use, but he's a hard citizen, and don't you forget it. He hasn't been home a single night till after eleven o'clock, and he was tired every night, and he had somebody come home with him."

"O, heavens, Hennery," said the mother, with a sigh, "are you sure about this?"

"Sure!" says the bad boy, "I was on to the whole racket. The first night they came home awful tickled, and I guess they drank some of your Sozodont, cause they seemed to foam at the mouth. Pa

HIS PA DANCES THE CAN-CAN.

wanted to put his friend in the spare bed, but there were no sheets on it, and he went to rumaging around in the drawers for sheets. He got out all the towels and table-cloths, and made up the bed with table-cloths, the first night, and in the morning the visitor kicked because there was a big coffee stain on the table-cloth sheet. You know that table-cloth you spilled the coffee on last spring, when Pa scared you by having his whiskers cut off. O, they raised thunder around the room. Pa took your night-shirt, you know the one with the lace work all down the front, and put a pillow in it, and set it on a chair, then took a burned match and marked eyes and nose on the pillow, and put your bonnet on it, and then they had a war dance. Pa hurt the bald spot on his head by hitting it against the gas chandelier, and then he said dammit. Then they throwed pillows at each other. Pa's friend didn't have any night shirt, and Pa gave his friend one of your'n, and the friend took that old hoop-skirt in the closet, the one Pa always steps on when he goes in the closet after a towel and hurts his bare foot, you know, and put it on under the night shirt, and they walked around arm in arm. O, it made me tired to see a man Pa's age act so like a darn fool."

"Hennery," says the mother, with a deep meaning in her voice, "I want to ask you one question. Did your Pa's friend *wear a dress?*"

"O, yes," said the bad boy, coolly, not noticing the pale face of his Ma, "the friend put on that old blue dress of yours, with the pistol pocket in front, you

know, and pinned a red cloth on for a train, and they danced the can-can."

Just at this point Pa came home to dinner, and the bad boy said, "Pa, I was just telling Ma what a nice time you had that first night she went away, with the pillows, and—"

"Hennery!" says the old gentleman severely, "you are a confounded fool."

"Izick," said the wife more severely, "Why did you bring a female home with you that night. Have you got no—"

"O, Ma," says the bad boy, it was not a woman. It was young Mr. Brown, Pa's clerk at the store, you know."

"O!" said Ma, with a smile and a sigh.

"Hennery," said his stern parent, "I want to see you there by the coal bin for a minute or two. You are the gaul durndest fool I ever see. What you want to learn the first thing you do is to keep your mouth shut," and then they went on with the frugal meal, while Hennery seemed to feel as though something was coming.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BAD BOY'S FOURTH OF JULY.

PA IS A POINTER NOT A SETTER—SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY—A GRAND SUPPLY OF FIRE WORKS—THE EXPLOSION—THE AIR FULL OF PA AND DOG AND ROCKETS—THE NEW HELL—A SCENE THAT BEGGARS DESCRIPTION.

"How long do you think it will be before your father will be able to come down to the office?" asked the druggist of the bad boy as he was buying some arnica and court plaster.

"O, the doc. says he could come down now if he would on some street where there were no horses to scare," said the boy as he bought some gum, "but he says he aint in no hurry to come down till his hair grows out, and he gets some new clothes made. Say, do you wet this court plaster and stick it on?"

The druggist told him how the court plaster worked, and then asked him if his Pa couldn't ride down town.

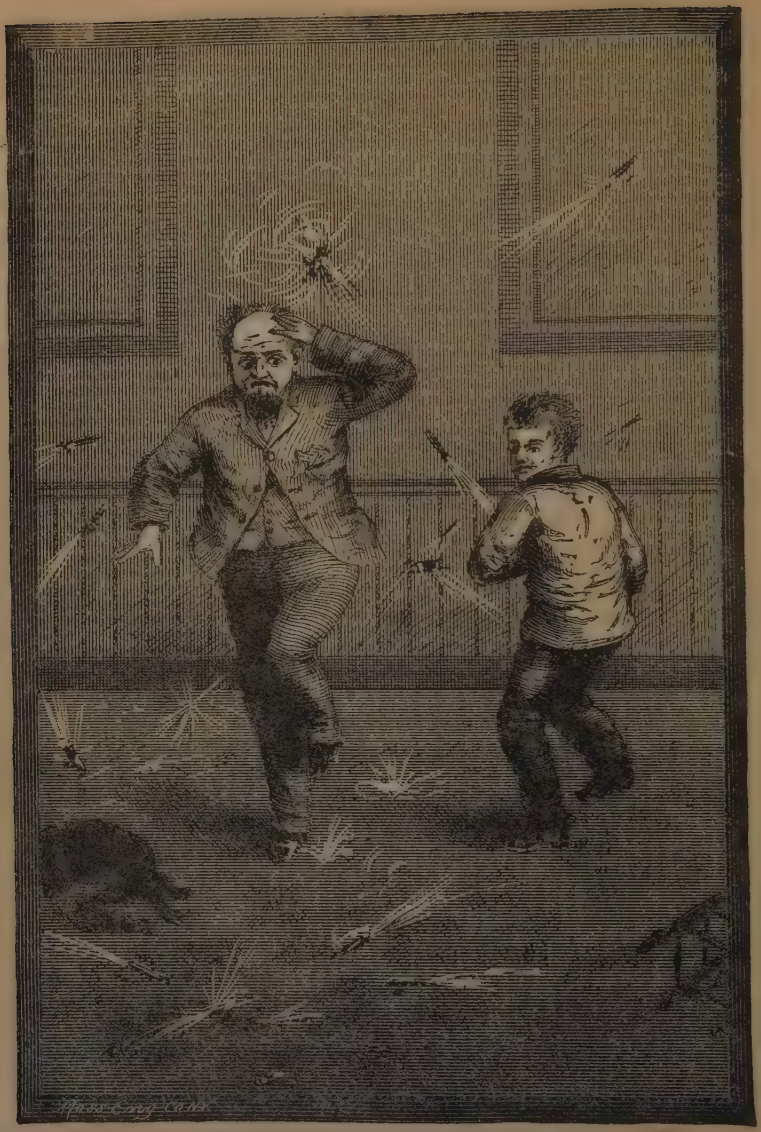
"Ride down? well, I guess nix. He would have to set down if he rode down town, and Pa is no set-

ter this trip, he is a pointer. That's where the pin-wheel struck him."

"Well how did it all happen?" asked the druggist, as he wrapped a yellow paper over the bottle of arnica, and twisted the ends, and then helped the boy stick the strip of court plaster on his nose.

"Nobody knows how it happened but Pa, and when I come near to ask him about it he feels around his night shirt where his pistol pocket would be if it was pants he had on, and tells me to leave his sight forever, and I leave too, quick. You see he is afraid I will get hurt every 4th of July, and he told me if I wouldn't fire a fire-cracker all day he would let me get four dollars' worth of nice fire-works and he would fire them off for me in the evening in the back yard. I promised, and he gave me the money and I bought a dandy lot of fire-works, and don't you forget it. I had a lot of rockets and Roman candles, and six pin-wheels, and a lot of nigger chasers, and some of these cannon fire-crackers, and torpedoes, and a box of parlor matches. I took them home and put the package in our big stuffed chair and put a newspaper over them.

Pa always takes a nap in that stuffed chair after dinner, and he went into the sitting room and I heard him driving our poodle dog out of the chair, and heard him ask the dog what he was a-chewing, and just then the explosion took place, and we all rushed in there, I tell you what I honestly think. I think that dog was chewing that box of parlor matches. This kind that pop so when you step on them.



THE GLORIOUS FOURTH OF JULY.

Pa was just going to set down when the whole air was filled with dog, and Pa, and rockets, and everything. When I got in there Pa had a sofa pillow trying to put the dog out, and in the meantime Pa's linen pants were afire. I grabbed a pail of this indigo water that they had been rinsing clothes with and throwed it on Pa, or there wouldn't have been a place on him biggern a sixpence that wasn't burnt, and then he threw a camp chair at me and told me to go to Gehenna. Ma says that's the new hell they have got up in the revised edition of the Bible for bad boys. When Pa's pants were out his coat-tail blazed up and a Roman candle was firing blue and red balls at his legs, and a rocket got into his white vest. The scene beggared description, like the Racine fire. A nigger chaser got after Ma and treed her on top of the sofa, and another one took after a girl that Ma invited to dinner, and burnt one of her stockings so she had to wear one of Ma's stockings, a good deal too big for her, home. After things got a little quiet, and we opened the doors and windows to let out the smoke and the smell of burnt dog hair, and Pa's whiskers, the big fire crackers began to go off, and a policeman came to the door and asked what was the matter, and Pa told him to go along with me to Gehenna, but I don't want to go with a policeman. It would give me dead away. Well, there was nobody hurt much but the dog and Pa. I felt awful sorry for the dog. He hasn't got hair enough to cover hisself. Pa didn't have much hair anyway, except by the ears, but he thought a good

deal of his whiskers, cause they wasn't very gray. Say, couldn't you send this anarchy up to the house? If I go up there Pa will say I am the damest fool on record. This is the last 4th of July you catch me celebrating. I am going to work in a glue factory, where nobody will ever come to see me."

And the boy went out to pick up some squib fire-crackers, that had failed to explode, in front of the drug store.

CHAPTER V.

THE BAD BOY'S MA COMES HOME.

NO DEVILTRY ONLY A LITTLE FUN—THE BAD BOY'S CHUM—A LADY'S WARDROBE IN THE OLD MAN'S ROOM—MA'S UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL—WHERE IS THE HUZZY ?—DAMFINO !—THE BAD BOY WANTS TO TRAVEL WITH A CIRCUS.

"WHEN is your ma coming back?" asked the grocery man, of the bad boy, as he found him standing on the sidewalk when the grocery was opened in the morning, taking some pieces of brick out of his coat tail pockets.

"O she got back at midnight, last night," said the boy, as he eat a few blue berries out of a case. "That's what makes me up so early, Pa has been kicking at these pieces of brick with his bare feet, and when I came away he had his toes in his hand and was trying to go back up stairs on one foot. Pa haint got no sense."

"I am afraid you are a terror," said the grocery man, as he looked at the innocent face of the boy, "You are always making your parents some trouble, and it is a wonder to me they don't send you to some reform school. What deviltry were you up to last night to get kicked this morning ?"

"No deviltry, just a little fun. You see, Ma went to Chicago to stay a week, and she got tired, and telegraphed she would be home last night, and Pa was down town and I forgot to give him the dispatch, and after he went to bed, me and a chum of mine thought we would have a 4th of July.

You see, my chum has got a sister about as big as Ma, and we hooked some of her clothes and after Pa got to snoring we put them in Pa's room. O, you'd a laffed. We put a pair of number one slippers with blue stockings, down in front of the rocking chair, beside Pa's boots, and a red corset on a chair, and my chum's sister's best black silk dress on another chair, and a hat with a white feather on, on the bureau, and some frizzes on the gas bracket, and everything we could find that belonged to a girl in my chum's sister's room. O, we got a red parasol too, and left it right in the middle of the floor. Well, when I looked at the lay-out, and heard Pa snoring, I thought I should die. You see, Ma knows Pa is a darn good feller, but she is easily excited. My chum slept with me that night, and when we heard the door bell ring I stuffed a pillow in my mouth. There was nobody to meet Ma at the depot, and she hired a hack and came right up. Nobody heard the bell but me, and I had to go down and let Ma in. She was pretty hot, now you bet, at not being met at the depot.

"Where's your father?" said she, as she began to go up stairs.

"I told her I guessed Pa had gone to sleep by this

time, but I heard a good deal of noise in the room about an hour ago, and may be he was taking a bath. Then I slipped up stairs and looked over the banisters. Ma said something about heavens and earth, and where is the huzzy, and a lot of things I couldn't hear, and Pa said damfino and its no such thing, and the door slammed and they talked for two hours. I s'pose they finally layed it to me, as they always do, 'cause Pa called me very early this morning, and when I came down stairs he came out in the hall and his face was redder'n a beet, and he tried to stab me with his big toe-nail, and if it hadn't been for these pieces of brick he would have hurt my feelings. I see they had my chum's sister's clothes all pinned up in a newspaper, and I s'pose when I go back I shall have to carry them home, and then she will be down on me. I'll tell you what, I have got a good notion to take some shoemaker's wax and stick my chum on my back and travel with a circus as a double headed boy from Borneo. A fellow could have more fun, and not get kicked all the time."

And the boy sampled some strawberries in a case in front of the store and went down the street whistling for his chum, who was looking out of an alley to see if the coast was clear.

CHAPTER VI.

HIS PA IS A DARN COWARD.

HIS PA HAS BEEN A MAJOR—HOW HE WOULD DEAL WITH BURGLARS—HIS BRAVERY PUT TO THE TEST —THE ICE REVOLVER—HIS PA BEGINS TO PRAY— TELLS WHERE THE CHANGE IS—"PLEASE MR. BURGLAR SPARE A POOR MAN'S LIFE!"— MA WAKES UP—THE BAD BOY AND HIS CHUM RUN—FISH-POLE SAUCE —MA WOULD MAKE A GOOD CHIEF OF POLICE.

"I suppose you think my Pa is a brave man," said the bad boy to the grocer, as he was trying a new can opener on a tin biscuit box in the grocery, while the grocer was putting up some canned goods for the boy, who said the goods where for the folks to use at a picnic, but which was to be taken out camping by the boy and his chum.

"O I suppose he is a brave man," said the grocer, as he charged the goods to the boy's father. "Your Pa is called a major, and you know at the time of the reunion he wore a veteran badge, and talked to the boys about how they suffered during the war."

"Suffered nothing," remarked the boy with a sneer, "unless they suffered from the peach brandy and leather pies Pa sold them. Pa was a sutler,

that's the kind of a veteran he was, and he is a coward."

"What makes you think your Pa is a coward?" asked the grocer, as he saw the boy slipping some sweet crackers into his pistol pocket."

"Well, my chum and me tried him last night, and he is so sick this morning that he can't get up. You see, since the burglars got into Magie's, Pa has been telling what he would do if the burglars got into our house. He said he would jump out of bed and knock one senseless with his fist, and throw the other over the banister. I told my chum Pa was a coward, and we fixed up like burglars, with masks on, and I had Pa's long hunting boots on, and we pulled caps down over our eyes, and looked fit to frighten a policeman. I took Pa's meerschaum pipe case and tied a little piece of ice over the end the stem goes in, and after Pa and Ma was asleep we went in the room, and I put the cold muzzle of the ice revolver to Pa's temple, and when he woke up I told him if he moved a muscle or said a word I would spatter the wall and the counterpane with his brains. He closed his eyes and began to pray. Then I stood off and told him to hold up his hands, and tell me where the valuables was. He held up his hands, and sat up in bed, and sweat and trembled, and told us the change was in his left hand pants pocket, and that Ma's money purse was in the bureau drawer in the cuff box, and my chum went and got them. Pa shook so the bed fairly squeaked and I told him I was a good notion

to shoot a few holes in him just for fun, and he cried and said please Mr. Burglar, take all I have got, but spare a poor old man's life, who never did any harm! Then I told him to lay down on his stomach and pull the clothes over his head, and stick his feet over the foot board, and he did it, and I took a shawl strap and was stapping his feet together, and he was scared, I tell you. It would have been all right if Ma hadn't woke up. Pa trembled so Ma woke up and thought he had the ager, and my chum turned up the light to see how much there was in Ma's purse, and Ma see me, and asked me what I was doing and I told her I was a burglar, robbing the house. I don't know whether Ma tumbled to the racket or not, but she threw a pillow at me, and said "get out of here or I'll take you across my knee," and she got up and we run. She followed us to my room, and took Pa's jointed fish pole and mauled us both until I don't want any more burgling, and my chum says he will never speak to me again. I didn't think Ma had so much sand. She is brave as a lion, and Pa is a regular squaw. Pa sent for me to come to his room this morning, but I ain't well, and am going out to Pewaukee to camp out till the burglar scare is over. If Pa comes around here talking about war times, and how he faced the enemy on many a well fought field, you ask him if he ever threw any burglars down a banister. He is a frod, Pa is, but Ma would make a good chief of police, and don't you let it escape you."

And the boy took his canned ham and lobster, and tucking some crackers inside the bosom of his blue flannel shirt, started for Pewaukee, while the grocer looked at him as though he was a hard citizen.

CHAPTER VII.

HIS PA GETS A BITE!

HIS PA GETS TOO MUCH WATER—THE DOCTOR'S DISAGREE—HOW TO SPOIL BOYS—HIS PA GOES TO PEWAUKEE IN SEARCH OF HIS SON—ANXIOUS TO FISH—"STOPER I'VE GOT A WHALE!"—OVERBOARD—HIS PA IS SAVED—GOES TO CUT A SWITCH—A DOLLAR FOR HIS PANTS.

"So the doctor thinks your Pa has ruptured a blood vessel, eh," says the street car driver to the bad boy, as the youngster was playing sweet on him to get a free ride down town.

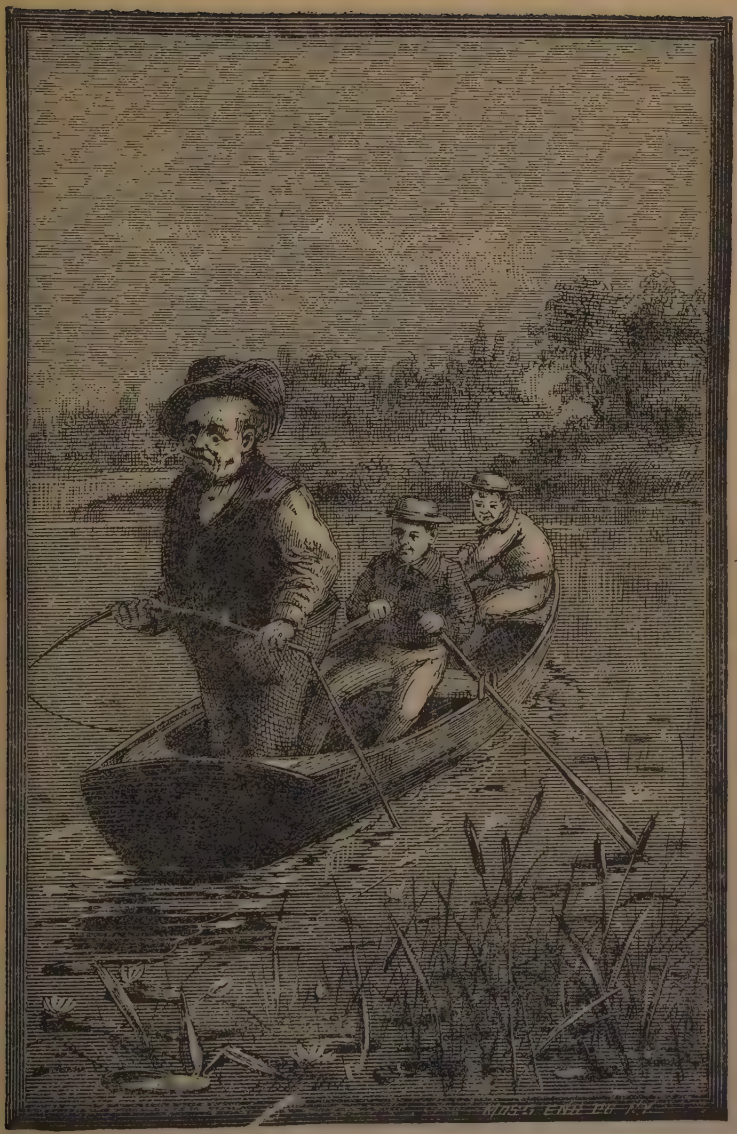
"Well, they don't know. The doctor at Pewaukee said Pa had dropsy, until he found the water that they wrung out of his pants was lake water, and there was a doctor on the cars belonging to the Insane Asylum, when we put Pa on the train, who said from the looks of his face, sort of red and blue, that it was apoplexy, but a horse doctor that was down at the depot when we put Pa in the carriage to take him home, said he was off his feed, and had been taking too much water when he was hot, and got foundered. O, you can't tell anything about doctors. No two of 'em guesses alike," an-

swered the boy, as he turned the brake for the driver to stop the car for a sister of charity, and then punched the mule with a fish pole, when the driver was looking back, to see if he couldn't jerk her off the back step.

"Well, how did your Pa happen to fall out of the boat? Didn't he know the lake was wet?"

"He had a suspicion that it was damp, when his back struck the water, I think. I'll tell you how it was. When my chum and I run away to Pewaukee, Ma thought we had gone off to be piruts, and she told Pa it was a duty he owed to society to go and get us to come back, and be good. She told him if he would treat me as an equal, and laugh and joke with me, I wouldn't be so bad. She said kicking and pounding spoiled more boys than all the Sunday schools. So Pa came out to our camp, about two miles up the lake from Pewaukee, and he was just as good natured as though we had never had any trouble at all. We let him stay all night with us, and gave him a napkin with a red border to sleep on under a tree, cause there was not blankets enough to go around, and in the morning I let him have one of the soda crackers I had in my shirt bosom and he wanted to go fishing with us. He said he would show us how to fish. So he got a piece of pork rind at a farm house for bait, and put it on a hook, and we got in an old boat, and my chum rowed and Pa and I trolled. In swinging the boat around Pa's line got under the boat, and come right up near me. I don't know what possessed me,

but I took hold of Pa's line and gave it a "yank," and Pa jumped so quick his hat went off in the lake. "Stoper," says Pa, "I've got a whale." It's mean in a man to call his chubby faced little boy a whale, but the whale yanked again and Pa began to pull him in. I hung on, and let the line out a little at a time, just zackly like a fish, and he pulled, and sweat, and the bald spot on his head was getting sun burnt, and the line cut my hand, so I wound it around the oar-lock, and Pa pulled hard enough to tip the boat over. He thought he had a forty pound musculunger, and he stood up in the boat and pulled on that oar-lock as hard as he could. I ought not to have done it, but I loosened the line from the oar-lock, and when it slacked up Pa went right out over the side of the boat, and struck on his pants. and split a hole in the water as big as a wash tub. His head went down under water, and his boot heels hung over in the boat. "What you doin'? Diving after the fish?" says I as Pa's head came up and he blowed out the water. I thought Pa belonged to the church, but he said "you damidyut." I guess he was talking to the fish. Wall, sir, my chum took hold of Pa's foot and the collar of his coat and held him in the stern of the boat, and I paddled the boat to the shore, and Pa crawled out and shook himself. I never had no ijee a man's pants could hold so much water. It was just like when they pull the thing on a street sprinkler. Then Pa took off his pants and my chum and me took hold of the legs and Pa took hold of the summer



"SKIPPER! I'VE GOT A WHALE!"

kitchen, and we rung the water out. Pa want so sociable after that, and he went back in the woods with his knife, with nothing on but a linen duster and a neck-tie, while his pants were drying on a tree, to cut a switch, and we hollered to him that a party of picnicers from Lake Side were coming ashore right where his pants were, to pic-nic, and Pa he run into the woods. He was afraid there would be some wimmen in the pic-nic that he knowed, and he coaxed us to come in the woods where he was, and he said he would give us a dollar a piece and not be mad any more if we would bring him his pants. We got his pants, and you ought to see how they was wrinkled when he put them on. They looked as though they had been ironed with waffle irons. We went to the depot and came home on a freight train, and Pa sneezed all the way in the caboose, and I don't think he has ruptured any blood vessel. Well, I get off here at Mitchell's bank," and the boy turned the brake and jumped off without paying his fare.

CHAPTER VIII.

HE IS TOO HEALTHY.

AN EMPTY CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE AND A BLACK EYE—HE IS ARRESTED—OCONOMOWOC FOR HEALTH—HIS PA IS AN OLD MASHER—DANCED TILL THE COWS CAME HOME—THE GIRL FROM THE SUNNY SOUTH—THE BAD BOY IS SENT HOME.

"THERE, I knew you would get into trouble," said the grocery man to the bad boy, as a policeman came along leading him by the ear, the boy having an empty champagne bottle in one hand, and a black eye. "What has he been doing Mr. Policeman?" asked the grocery man, as the policeman halted with the boy in front of the store.

"Well, I was going by a house up here when this kid opened the door with a quart bottle of champagne, and he cut the wire and fired the cork at another boy, and the champagne went all over the sidewalk, and some of it went on me, and I knew there was something wrong, cause champagne is to expensive to waste that way, and he said he was running the shebang and if I would bring him here you would say he was all right. If you say so I will let him go."

The grocery man said he had better let the boy go, as his parents would not like to have their little

pet locked up. So the policeman let go his ear, and he throwed the empty bottle at a coal wagon, and after the policeman had brushed the champagne off his coat, and smelled of his fingers, and started off, the grocery man turned to the boy, who was peeling a cucumber, and said:

"Now, what kind of a circus have you been having, and what do you mean by destroying wine that way! and where are your folks?"

"Well, I'll tell you. Ma she has got the hay fever and has gone to Lake Superior to see if she can't stop sneezing, and Saturday Pa said he and me would go out to Oconomowoc and stay over Sunday, and try and recuperate our health. Pa said it would be a good joke for me not to call him Pa, but to act as though I was his younger brother, and we would have a real nice time. I knowed what he wanted. He is an old masher, that's what's the matter with him, and he was going to play himself for a batchelor. O, thunder, I got on to his racket in a minute. He was introduced to some of the girls and Saturday evening he danced till the cows come home. At home he is awful fraid of rheumatiz, and he never sweats, or sits in a draft; but the water just poured off'n him, and he stood in the door and let a girl fan him till I was afraid he would freeze, and just as he was telling a girl from Tennessee, who was joking him about being a nold batch, that he was not sure as he could always hold out a woman hater if he was to be thrown into contact with the charming ladies of the Sunny South, I pul-

led his coat and said, "Pa how do you spose Ma's hay fever is to-night. I'll bet she is just sneezing the top of her head off." Wall, sir, you just oughten seen that girl and Pa. Pa looked at me as if I was a total stranger, and told the porter if that freckled faced boot-black belonged around the house he had better be fired out of the ball-room, and the girl said the disgustin' thing, and just before they fired me I told Pa he had better look out or he would sweat through his liver pad.

I went to bed and Pa staid up till the lights were put out. He was mad when he came to bed, but he didn't lick me, cause the people in the next room would hear him, but the next morning he talked to me. He said I might go back home Sunday night, and he would stay a day or two. He sat around on the veranda all the afternoon, talking with the girls, and when he would see me coming along he would look cross. He took a girl out boat riding, and when I asked him if I couldn't go along, he said he was afraid I would get drowned, and he said if I went home there was nothing there too good for me, and so my chum and me got to firing bottles of champane, and he hit me in the eye with a cork, and I drove him out doors and was just going to shell his earth works, when the policeman collared me. Say, what's good for a black eye?"

The grocery man told him his Pa would cure it when he got home, "What do you think your Pa's object was in passing himself off for a single man at Oconomowoc," asked the grocery man, as he charged up the cucumber to the boy's father.

"That's what beats me. Aside from Ma's hay fever she is one of the healthiest women in this town. O, I suppose he does it for his health, the way they all do when they go to a summer resort, but it leaves a boy an orphan, don't it, to have such kitteny parents."

CHAPTER IX.

HIS PA HAS GOT 'EM AGAIN!

HIS PA IS DRINKING HARD—HE HAS BECOME A TERROR —A JUMPING DOG—THE OLD MAN IS SHAMEFULLY ASSAULTED—"THIS IS A HELLISH CLIMATE MY BOY!"—HIS PA SWEARS OFF—HIS MA STILL SNEEZING AT LAKE SUPERIOR.

"IF the dogs in our neighborhood hold out I guess I can do something that all the temperance societies in this town have failed to do," says the bad boy to the grocery man, as he cut off a piece of cheese and took a handful of crackers out of a box.

"Well for Heaven's sake, what have you been doing now, you little reprobate," asked the grocery man, as he went to the desk and charged the boy's father with a pound and four ounces of cheese and two pounds of crackers. "If you was my boy and played any of your tricks on me I would maul the everlasting life out of you. Your father is a cussed fool that he dont send you to the reform school. The hired girl was over this morning and says your father is sick, and I should think he would be. What you done? Poisoned him I suppose."

"No, I didn't poison him; I just scared the liver out of him, that's all."

"How was it," asked the groceryman, as he charged up a pound of prunes to the boy's father.

"Well, I'll tell you, but if you ever tell Pa I wont trade here any more. You see, Pa belongs to all the secret societies, and when there is a grand lodge or anything here, he drinks awfully. There was something last week, some sort of a leather apron affair, or a sash over the shoulder, and every night he was out till the next day, and his breath smelled all the time like in front of a vinegar store, where they keep yeast. Ever since Ma took her hay fever with her up to Lake Superior, Pa has been a terror, and I thought something ought to be done. Since that variegated dog trick was played on him he has been pretty sober till Ma went away, and I happened to think of a dog a boy in the Third Ward has got, that will do tricks. He will jump up and take a man's hat off, and bring a handkerchief, and all that. So I got the boy to come up on our street, and Monday night, about dark, I got in the house and told the boy when Pa came along to make the dog take his hat, and to pin a handkerchief to Pa's coat tail and make the dog take that, and then for him and the dog to lite out for home. Well, you'd a dide. Pa came up the street as dignified and important as though he had gone through bankruptcy, and tried to walk straight, and just as he got near the door the boy pointed to Pa's hat and said, "Fetch it." The dog is a big Newfoundland, but he is a jumper, and don't you forget it. Pa is short and thick, and when the dog struck him on the shoulder

and took his hat Pa almost fell over, and then he said get out, and he kicked and backed up toward the step, and then turned around and the boy pointed to the handkerchief and said, "fetch it," and the dog gave one bark and went for it, and got hold of it and a part of Pa's duster, and Pa tried to climb up the steps on his hands and feet, and the dog pulled the other way, and it is an old last year's duster anyway, and the whole back breadth come out, and when I opened the door there Pa stood with the front of his coat and the sleeves on, but the back was gone, and I took hold of his arm, and he said, "Get out," and was going to kick me, thinking I was a dog, and I told him I was his own little boy, and asked him if anything was the matter, and he said, "M (hic) atter enough. New F (hic) lanp dog chawing me last hour'n a half. Why didn't you come and k (hic) ill 'em?" I told Pa there was no dog at all, and he must be careful of his health or I wouldn't have no Pa at all. He looked at me and asked me, as he felt for the place where the back of his linen duster was, what had become of his coat-tail and hat if there was no dog, and I told him he had probably caught his coat on that barbed wire fence down street, and he said he saw the dog and a boy just as plain as could be, and for me to help him up stairs and go for the doctor. I got him in the bed, and he said, "this is a hellish climate my boy," and I went for the doctor. Pa said he wanted to be cauterised, so he wouldn't go mad. I told the doc. the joke. and he said he would keep it up, and he

gave Pa some powders, and told him if he drank any more before Christmas he was a dead man. Pa says it has learned him a lesson and they can never get any more pizen down him, but don't you give me away, will you, cause he would go and complain to the police about the dog, and they would shoot it. Ma will be back as soon as she gets through sneezing, and I will tell her, and she will give me a chomeo, cause she dont like to have Pa drink only between meals. Well, good day. There's a Italian got a bear that performs in the street, and I am going to find where he is showing, and feed the bear a cayenne pepper lozenger, and see him clean out the Pollack settlement. Good bye." And the boy went to look for the bear.

CHAPTER X.

HIS PA HAS GOT RELIGION.

THE BAD BOY GOES TO SUNDAY SCHOOL—PROMISES REFORMATION—THE OLD MAN ON TRIAL FOR SIX MONTHS—WHAT MA THINKS—ANTS IN PA'S LIVER-PAD—THE OLD MAN IN CHURCH—RELIGION IS ONE THING—ANTS ANOTHER.

"WELL, that beats the devil," said the grocery man, as he stood in front of his grocery and saw the bad boy coming along, on the way home from Sunday school, with a clean shirt on, and a testament and some dime novels under his arm. "What has got into you, and what has come over your Pa. I see he has braced up, and looks pale and solemn. You haven't converted him have you?"

"No, Pa has not got religion enough to hurt yet, but he has got the symptoms. He has joined the church on prowbation, and is trying to be good so he can get in the church for keeps. He said it was hell living the way he did, and he has got me to promise to go to Sunday school. He said if I didn't he would maul me so my skin wouldn't hold water. You see, Ma said Pa had got to be on trial for six months before he could get in the church, and if he could get along without swearing and doing any-

thing bad, he was all right, and we must try him and see if we could cause him to swear. She said she thought a person, when they was on a prowbation, ought to be a martyr, and try and overcome all temptations to do evil, and if Pa could go through six months of our home life, and not cuss the hinges off the door, he was sure of a glorious immortality beyond the grave. She said it wouldn't be wrong for me to continue to play innocent jokes on Pa, and if he took it all right he was a Christian, but if he got a hot box, and flew around mad, he was better out of church than in it. There he comes now," said the boy as he got behind a sign, "and he is pretty hot for a Christian. He is looking for me. You had ought to have seen him in church this morning. You see, I commenced the exercises at home after breakfast by putting a piece of ice in each of Pa's boots, and when he pulled on the boots he yelled that his feet were all on fire, and we told him that it was nothing but symptoms of gout, so he left the ice in his boots to melt, and he said all the morning that he felt as though he had sweat his boots full. But that was not the worst. You know, Pa he wears a liver-pad. Well, on Saturday my chum and me was out on the lake shore and we found a nest of ants, these little red ants, and I got a pop bottle half full of the ants and took them home. I didn't know what I would do with the ants, but ants are always handy to have in the house. This morning, when Pa was dressing for church, I saw his liver-pad on a chair, and noticed

a hole in it, and I thought what a good place it would be for the ants. I don't know what possessed me, but I took the liver-pad into my room, and opened the bottle, and put the hole over the mouth of the bottle and I guess the ants thought there was something to eat in the liver-pad, cause they all went into it, and they crawled around in the bran and condition powders inside of it, and I took it back to Pa, and he put it on under his shirt, and dressed himself, and we went to church. Pa squirmed a little when the minister was praying, and I guess some of the ants had come out to view the landscape o'er. When we got up to sing the hymn Pa kept kicking, as though he was nervous, and he felt down his neck and looked sort of wild, the way he did when he had the jim-jams. When we sat down Pa couldn't keep still, and I like to dide when I saw some of the ants come out of his shirt bosom and go racing around his white vest. Pa tried to look pious, and resigned, but he couldn't keep his legs still, and he sweat mor'n a pail full. When the minister preached about "the worm that never dieth," Pa reached into his vest and scratched his ribs, and he looked as though he would give ten dollars if the minister would get through. Ma she looked at Pa as though she would bite his head off, but Pa he just squirmed, and acted as though his soul was on fire. Say, does ants bite, or just crawl around? Well, when the minister said amen, and prayed the second round, and then said a brother who was a missionary to the heathen would like to

make a few remarks about the work of the missionaries in Bengal, and take up a collection, Pa told Ma they would have to excuse *him*, and he lit out for home, slapping himself on the legs and on the arms and on the back, and he acted crazy. Ma and me went home, after the heathen got through, and found Pa in his bed room, with part of his clothes off, and the liver-pad was on the floor, and Pa was stamping on it with his boots, and talking offul.

"What is the matter," says Ma. "Don't your religion agree with you?"

"Religion be dashed," says Pa, as he kicked the liver pad. "I would give ten dollars to know how a pint of red ants got into my liver pad. Religon is one thing, and a million ants walking all over a man, playing tag, is another. I didn't know the liver pad was loaded. How in Gehenna did they get in there?" and Pa scowled at Ma as though he would kill her.

"Don't swear dear," says Ma, as she threw down her hymn book, and took off her bonnet. "You should be patient. Remember Job was patient, and he was afflicted with sore boils."

"I don't care," says Pa, as he chased the ants out of his drawers, "Job never had ants in his liver pad. If he had he would have swore the shingles off a barn. Here you," says Pa, speaking to me, "you head off them ants running under the bureau. If the truth was known I believe you would be responsible for this outrage." And Pa looked at me kind of hard.

"O, Pa," says I, with tears in my eyes, "Do you think your little Sunday school boy would catch ants in a pop bottle on the lake shore, and bring them home, and put them in the hole of your liver pad, just before you put it on to go to church? You are to bad." And I shed some tears. I can shed tears now any time I want to, but it didn't do any good this time. Pa knew it was me, and while he was looking for the shawl strap I went to Sunday school, and now I guess he is after me, and I will go and take a walk down to Bay View."

The boy moved off as his Pa turned a corner, and the grocery man said, "Well, that boy beats all I ever saw If he was mine I would give him away."

CHAPTER XI.

HIS PA TAKES A TRICK.

JAMAICA RUM AND CARDS—THE BAD BOY POSSESSED OF A DEVIL—THE KIND DEACON—AT PRAYER MEETING—THE OLD MAN TELLS HIS EXPERIENCE—THE FLYING CARDS—THE PRAYER MEETING SUDDENLY CLOSED.

"WHAT is it I hear about your Pa being turned out of prayer meeting Wednesday night," asked the grocer of the bad boy, as he came over after some cantelopes for breakfast, and plugged a couple to see if they were ripe.

"He wasn't turned out of prayer meeting at all. The people all went away and Pa and me was the last ones out of the church. But Pa was mad, and don't you forget it."

"Well, what seemed to be the trouble? Has your Pa become a backslider?"

"O, no, his flag is still there. But something seems to go wrong. You see, when we got ready to go to prayer meeting last night. Pa told me to go up stairs and get him a hankerchief, and to drop a little perfumery on it, and put it in the tail pocket of his black coat. I did it, but I guess I got hold of

the wrong bottle of fumery. There was a label on the fumery bottle that said 'Jamaica Rum,' and I thought it was the same as Bay Rum, and I put on a whole lot. Just afore I put the hankerchief in Pa's pocket, I noticed a pack of cards on the stand, that Pa used to play hi lo-jack with Ma evenings when he was so sick he could't go down town, before he got 'ligion, and I wrapped the hankercher around the pack of cards and put them in his pocket. I don't know what made me do it, and Pa don't, either, I guess, 'cause he told Ma this morning I was possessed of a devil. I never owned no devil, but I had a pair of pet goats onct, and they played hell all around, Pa said. That's what the devil does, ain't it? Well, I must go home with these melons, or they won't keep."

"But hold on," says the grocery man as he gave the boy a few rasins with worms in, that he couldn't sell, to keep him, "what about the prayer meeting?"

"O, I like to forgot. Well Pa and me went to prayer meeting, and Ma came along afterwards with a deakin that is mashed on her, I guess, 'cause he says she is to be pitted for havin' to go through life yoked to such an old prize ox as Pa. I heard him tell Ma that, when he was helping her put on her rubber waterprivilege to go home in the rain the night of the sociable, and she looked at him just as she does at me when she wants me to go down to the hair foundry after her switch, and said, "O, you dear brother," and all the way home he kept her

waterprivilege on by putting his arm on the small of her back. Ma asked Pa if he didn't think the deakin was real kind, and Pa said, "yez, dam kind," but that was afore he got 'ligion. We sat in a pew, at the prayer meeting, next to Ma and the deakin, and there was lots of pious folks all round there. After the preacher had gone to bat, and an old lady had her innings, a praying, and the singers had got out on first base, Pa was on deck, and the preacher said they would like to hear from the recent convert, who was trying to walk in the straight and narrow way, but who found it so hard, owing to the many crosses he had to bear. Pa knowed it was him that had to go to bat, and he got up and said he felt it was good to be there. He said he didn't feel that he was a full sized Christian yet, but he was getting in his work the best he could. He said at times everything looked dark to him, and he feared he should falter by the wayside, but by a firm resolve he kept his eye sot on the future, and if he was tempted to do wrong he said get thee behind me, Satan, and stuck in his toe-nails for a pull for the right. He said he was thankful to the brothers and sisters, particularly the sisters, for all they had done to make his burden light, and hoped to meet them all in—. When Pa got as far as that he sort of broke down. I spose he was going to say heaven, though after a few minutes they all thought he wanted to meet them in a saloon. When his eyes began to leak, Pa put his hand in his tail pocket for his handkercher, and got hold of it, and gave it a jerk, and

out came the handkercher, and the cards. Well, if he had shuffled them, and Ma had cut them, and he had dealt six hands, they couldn't have been dealt any better. They flew into everybody's lap. The deakin that was with Ma got the jack of spades and three aces and a deuce, and Ma got some nine spots and a king of hearts, and Ma nearly fainted, cause she didn't get a better hand, I spose. The preacher got a pair of deuces, and a queen of hearts, and he looked up at Pa as though it was a misdeal, and a old woman who sat across the aisle, she only got two cards, but that was enough. Pa didn't see what he done at first, cause he had the handkerchief over his eyes, but when he smelled the rum on it, he took it away, and then he saw everybody discarding, and he thought he had struck a poker game, and he looked around as though he was mad cause they didn't deal him a hand. The minister adjourned the prayer meeting and whispered to Pa, and everybody went out holding their noses on account of Pa's fumery, and when Pa came home he asked Ma what he should do to be saved. Ma said she didn't know. The deakin told her Pa seemed wedded to his idols. Pa said the deakin better run his own idols, and Pa would run his. I don't know how it is going to turn out, but Pa says he is going to stick to the church.

CHAPTER XII.

HIS PA GETS PULLED.

THE OLD MAN STUDIES THE BIBLE—DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN—THE MULE AND THE MULE'S FATHER—MURDER IN THE THIRD WARD—THE OLD MAN ARRESTED—THE OLD MAN FANS THE DUST OUT OF HIS SON'S PANTS.

"WHAT was you and your Ma down to the police station for so late last night?" asked the grocery man of the bad boy, as he kicked a dog away from a basket of peaches standing on the sidewalk "Your Ma seemed to be much affected."

"That's a family secret. But if you will give me some of those rotton peaches I will tell you, if you won't ever ask Pa how he came to be pulled by the police."

The grocery man told him to help himself out of the basket that the dog had been smelling of, and he filled his pockets, and the bosom of his flannel shirt, and his hat, and said:

"Well, you know Pa is studying up on the Bible, and he is trying to get me interested, and he wants me to ask him questions, but if I ask him any questions that he can't answer, he gets mad. When I asked him about Daniel in the den of lions, and if he didn't think Dan was traveling with a show,

and had the lions chloroformed, he said I was a scoffer, and would go to Gehenna. Now I don't want to go to Gehenna just for wanting to get posted in the show business of old times, do you? When Pa said Dan was saved from the jaws of the lions because he prayed three times every day, and had faith, I told him that was just what the duffer that goes into the lions den in Coup's circus did because I saw him in the dressing room, when me and my chum got in for carrying water for the elephant, and he was exhorting with a girl in tights who was going to ride two horses. Pa said I was mistaken, cause they never prayed in circus, 'cept the lemonade butchers. I guess I know when I hear a man pray. Coup's Daniel talked just like a deacon at class meeting, and told the girl to go to the place where the minister says we will all go if we don't do different. Pa says it is wicked to speak of Daniel in the same breath that you speak of a circus, so I am wicked I 'spose. Well, I couldn't help it and when he wanted me to ask him questions about Elijah going up in a chariot of fire, I asked him if he believed a chariot like the ones in the circus, with eight horses, could carry a man right up to the clouds, and Pa said of course it could. Then I asked him what they did with the horses after they got up there, or if the chariot kept running back and forth like a bust to a pic-nic, and whether they had stalls for the horses and harness-makers to repair harnesses, and wagon-makers, cause a chariot is liable to run off a wheel, if it strikes a cloud in turn-

ing a corner. Pa said I made him tired. He said I had no more conception of the beauties of scripture than a mule, and then I told Pa he couldn't expect a mule to know much unless the mule's father had brought him up right, and where a mule's father had been a regular old bummer till he got jim-jams, and only got religon to keep out of the inebriate asylum, that the little mule was entitled to more charity for his short comings than the mule's Papa. That seemed to make Pa mad, and he said the scripture lesson would be continued some other time, and I might go out and play, and if I wasn't in before nine o'clock he would come after me and warm my jacket. Well, I was out playing, and me and my chum heard of the murder in the Third Ward, and went down there to see the dead and wounded, and it was after ten o'clock, and Pa was searching for me, and I saw Pa go into an alley, in his shirt sleves and no hat on, and the police were looking for the murderer, and I told the policeman that there was a suspicious looking man in the alley, and the policeman went in there and jumped on his back, and held him down, and the patrol wagon came, and they loaded Pa in, and he gnashed his teeth, and said they would pay dearly for this, and they held his hands and told him not to talk, as he would commit himself, and they tore off his suspender buttons, and I went home and told Ma the police had pulled Pa for being in a suspicious place, and she said she had always been afraid he would come to some bad end, and we

went down to the station and the police let Pa go on promise that he wouldn't do so again, and we went home and Pa fanned the dust out of my pants. But he did it in a pious manner, and I can't complain. He was trying to explain to Ma how it was that he was pulled, when I came away, and I guess he will make out to square himself. Say, don't these peaches seem to have a darn queer taste. Well, good bye. I am going down to the morgue to have some fun."

CHAPTER XIII.

HIS PA GOES TO THE EXPOSITION.

THE BAD BOY ACTS AS GUIDE—THE CIRCUS STORY—THE OLD MAN WANTS TO SIT DOWN—TRIES TO EAT PANCAKES—DRINKS SOME MINERAL WATER—THE OLD MAN FALLS IN LOVE WITH A WAX WOMAN—A POLICEMAN INTERFERES—THE LIGHTS GO OUT—THE GROCERY-MAN DON'T WANT A CLERK.

"WELL, everything seems to be quiet over to your house this week," says the groceryman to the bad boy, as the youth was putting his thumb into some peaches through the mosquito netting over the baskets, to see if they were soft enough to steal, "I suppose you have let up on the old man, haven't you?"

"O, no. We keep it right up. The minister of the church that Pa has joined says while Pa is on probation it is perfecly proper for us to do everything to try him, and make him fall from grace. The minister says if Pa comes out of his six months probation without falling by the wayside he has got the elements to make the boss christian, and Ma and me are doing all we can."

"What was the doctor at your house for this morning?" asked the groceryman. "Is your Ma sick?"

"No, Ma is worth two in the bush. It's Pa that ain't well. He is having some trouble with his digestion. You see he went to the exposition with me as guide, and that is enough to ruin any man's digestion. Pa is near-sighted, and he said he wanted me to go along and show him things. Well, I never had so much fun since Pa fell out of the boat. First we went in by the fountain, and Pa never had been in the exposition building before. Last year he was in Yourip, and he was astonished at the magnitude of everything. First I made him jump clear across the aisle there, where the stuffed tigers are, by the fur place. I told him the keeper was just coming along with some meat to feed the animals, and when they smelled the meat they just clawed things. He run against a show-case, and then wanted to go away.

He said he traveled with a circus when he was young, and nobody knew the dangers of fooling around wild animals better than he did. He said once he fought with seven tigers and two Nubian lions for five hours, with Mabee's old show. I asked him if that was afore he got religin, and he said never you mind. He is an old liar, even if he is converted. Ma says he never was with a circus, and she has known him ever since he wore short dresses. Wall, you would a dide to see Pa there by the furniture place, where they have got beautiful beds and chairs. There was one blue chair nnder a glass case, all velvet, and a sign was over it, telling people to keep their hands off. Pa asked me what

the sign was, and I told him it said ladies and gentlemen are requested to sit in the chairs and try them. Pa climbed over the railing and was just going to sit down on the glass show case over the chair, when one of the walk-around fellows, with imitation police hats, took him by the collar and yanked him back over the railing, and was going to kick Pa's pants. Pa was mad to have his coat collar pulled up over his head, and have the set of his coat spoiled, and he was going to sass the man, when I told Pa the man was a lunatic from the asylum, that was on exhibition, and Pa wanted to go away from there. He said he didn't know what they wanted to exhibit lunatics for. We went up stairs to the pancake bazar, where they broil pancakes out of self rising flour, and put butter and sugar on them and give them away. Pa said he could eat more pancakes than any man out of jail, and wanted me to get him some. I took a couple of pancakes and tore out a piece of the lining of my coat and put it between the pancakes and handed them to Pa, with a paper around the pancakes. Pa didn't notice the paper nor the cloth, and it would have made you laff to see him chew on them. I told him I guessed he didn't have as good teeth as he used to, and he said never you mind the teeth, and he kept on until he swallowed the whole business, and he said he guessed he didn't want any more. He is so sensitive about his teeth that he would eat a leather apron if anybody told him he couldn't. When the doctor said Pa's digestion was bad, I told

him if he could let Pa swallow a seamstress, or a sewing machine, to sew up the cloth, he would get well, and the Doc. says I am going to be the death of Pa some day. But I thought I should split when Pa wanted a drink of water. I asked him if he would druther have mineral water, and he said he guessed it would take the strongest kind of mineral water to wash down them pancakes, so I took him to where the fire extinguishers are, and got him to take the nozzle of the extinguisher in his mouth, and I turned the faucet. I don't think he got more than a quart of the stuff out of the saleratus machine down him, but he rared right up and said he be condamed if believed that water was ever intended to drink, and he felt as though he should bust, and just then the man who kicks the big organ struck up and the building shook, and I guess Pa thought he *had* busted. The most fun was when we came along to where the wax woman is. They have got a wax woman dressed up to kill, and she looks just as natural as if she could breathe. She had a handkerchief in her hand, and as we came along I told Pa there was a lady that seemed to know him. Pa is on the mash himself, and he looked at her and smiled and said good evening, and asked me who she was.

I told him it looked to me like the girl that sings in the choir at our church, and Pa said corse it is, and he went right in where she was and said "pretty good show, isn't it," and put out his hand to shake hands with her, but the woman who tends the stand

came along and thought Pa was drunk and said "old gentleman I guess you had better get out of here. This is for ladies only."

Pa said he didn't care nothing about her lady's only, all he wanted was to converse with an acquaintance, and then one of the policemen came along and told Pa he had better go down to the saloon where he belonged. Pa excused himself to the wax woman, and said he would see her later, and told the policeman if he would come out on the sidewalk he would knock leven kinds of stuffin out of him. The policeman told him that would be all right, and I led Pa away. He was offul mad. But it was the best fun when the lights went out. You see the electric light machine slipped a cog, or lost its cud, and all of a sudden the lights went out and it was as dark as a squaw's pocket. Pa wanted to know what made it so dark, and I told him it was not dark. He said boy don't you fool me. You see I thought it would be fun to make Pa believe he was struck blind, so I told him his eyes must be wrong. He said do you mean to say you can see, and I told him everything was as plain as day, and I pointed out the different things, and explained them, and walked Pa along, and acted just as though I could see, and Pa said it had come at last. He had felt for years as though he would some day lose his eyesight and now it had come and he said he laid it all to that condamned mineral water. After a little they lit some of the gas burners, and Pa said he could see a little, and wanted to go home, and I took him

home. When we got out of the building he began to see things, and said his eyes were coming around all right. Pa is the easiest man to fool ever I saw."

"Well, I should think he would kill you," said the grocery man. "Don't he ever catch on, and find out you have deceived him?"

"O, sometimes. But about nine times in ten I can get away with him. Say, don't you want to hire me for a clerk?"

The grocery man said that he had rather have a spotted hyena, and the boy stole a melon and went away.

CHAPTER XIV.

HIS PA CATCHES ON.

TWO DAYS AND NIGHTS IN THE BATH ROOM—RELIGION CAKES THE OLD MAN'S BREAST—THE BAD BOY'S CHUM—DRESSED UP AS A GIRL—THE OLD MAN DELUDED—THE COUPLE START FOR THE COURT HOUSE PARK—HIS MA APPEARS ON THE SCENE—"IF YOU LOVE ME KISS ME"—MA TO THE RESCUE—"I AM DEAD AM I?" HIS PA THROWS A CHAIR THROUGH THE TRANSOM.

"WHERE have you been for a week back," asked the grocery man of the bad boy, as the boy pulled the tail board out of the delivery wagon accidentally and let a couple of bushels of potatoes roll out into the gutter. "I haven't seen you around here, and you look pale. You haven't been sick, have you?"

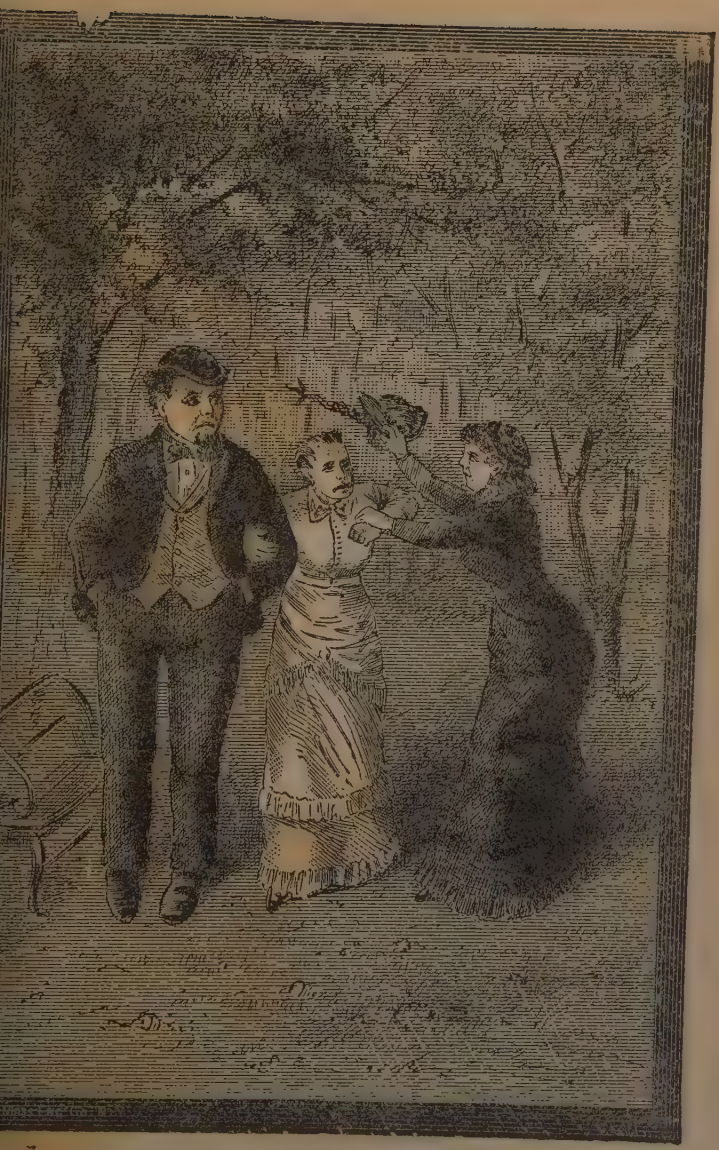
"No, I have not been sick. Pa locked me up in the bath-room for two days and two nights, and didn't give me nothing to eat but bread and water. Since he has got religious he seems to be harder than ever on me. Say, do you think religion softens a man's heart, or does it give him a caked breast? I 'spect Pa will burn me at the stake next."

The grocery man said that when a man had truly been converted his heart was softened, and he was always looking for a chance to do good and be kind to the poor, but if he only had this galvanized religion, this roll plate piety, or whitewashed reformation, he was liable to be a harder citizen than before. "What made your Pa lock you up in the bath-room on bread and water?" he asked.

"Well," says the boy, as he eat a couple of salt pickles out of a jar on the sidewalk, "Pa is not converted enough to hurt him, and I knowed it, and I thought it would be a good joke to try him and see if he was so confounded good, so I got my chum to dress up in a suit of his sister's summer clothes. Well, you wouldn't believe my chum would look so much like a girl. He would fool the oldest inhabitant. You know how fat he is. He had to sell his bicycle to a slim fellow that clerks in a store, cause he didn't want it any more. His neck is just as fat and there are dimples in it, and with a dress low in the neck, and long at the trail he looks as tall as my Ma. He busted one of his sister's slippers getting them on, and her stockings were a good deal too big for him, but he tucked his drawers down in them and tied a suspender around his leg above the knee, and they stayed on all right. Well, he looked killin', I should prevaricate, with his sister's muslin dress on, starched as stiff as a shirt, and her reception hat with a white feather as big as a Newfoundland dog's tail. Pa said he had got to go down-town to see some of the old soldiers of his regiment, and I

loafed along behind. My chum met Pa on the corner and asked him where the Lake Shore Park was. "She" said she was a stranger from Chicago, that her husband had deserted her and she didn't know but she would jump into the lake. Pa looked in my chum's eye and sized her up, and said it would be a shame to commit suicide, and asked if she didn't want to take a walk, My chum said he should titter, and he took Pa's arm and they walked up to the lake and back. Well, you may talk about joining the church on probation all you please, but they get their arm around a girl all the same. Pa hugged my chum till he says he thought Pa would break his sister's corset all to pieces, and he squeezed my chum's hand till the ring cut right into his finger and he has to wear a piece of court plaster on it. They started for the Court House park, as I told my chum to do, and I went and got Ma. It was about time for the soldiers to go to the exposition for the evening bizness, and I told Ma we could go down and see them go by. Ma just throwed a shawl over her head and we started down through the park. When we got near Pa and my chum I told Ma it was a shame for so many people to be sitting around lally-gagging right before folks, and she said it was disgustin', and then I pointed to my chum who had his head on Pa's bosom, and Pa was patting my chum on the cheek, while he held his other arm around his waist, They was on the iron seat, and we came right up behind them and when Ma saw Pa's bald head I thought she would bust. She knew

his head as quick as she sot eyes on it. My chum asked Pa if he was married, and he said he was a widower, He said his wife died fourteen years ago, of liver complaint. Well, Ma shook like a leaf, and I could hear her new teeth rattle just like chewing strawberries with sand in them. Then my chum put his arms around Pa's neck and said, "If you love me kiss me in the mouth." Pa was just leaning down to kiss my chum when Ma couldn't stand it any longer, and she went right around in front of them, and she grabbed my chum by the hair and it all came off, hat and all, and my chum jumped up and Ma scratched him in the face, and my chum tried to get his hands in his pants pocket to get his handkerchief to wipe off the blood on his nose, and Ma she turned on Pa and he turned pale, and then she was going for my chum again when he said, "O let up on a feller," and he see she was mad and he grabbed the hat and hair off the gravel walk and took the skirt of his sister's dress in his hand and lifted out for home on a gallop, and Ma took Pa by the elbow and said, "You are a nice old party, ain't you? I am dead, am I? Died of liver complaint fourteen years ago, did I? You will find an animated corpse on your hands. Around kissing spry wimmen out in the night, sir." When they started home Pa seemed to be as weak as a cat, and couldn't say a word, and I asked if I could go to the exposition, and they said I could, I don't know what happened after they got home, but Pa was setting up for me when I got back and he wanted to



HIS MA APPEARS ON THE SCENE.

know what I brought Ma down there for, and how I knew he was there.

I thought it would help Pa out of the scrape and so I told him it was not a girl he was hugging at all, but it was my chum, and he laffed at first, and told Ma it was not a girl, but Ma said she knew a darn sight better. She guessed she could tell a girl.

Then Pa was mad and he said I was at the bottom of the whole bizness, and he locked me up, and said I was enough to paralyze a saint. I told him through the key-hole that a saint that had any sense ought to tell a boy from a girl, and then he throwed a chair at me through the transom. The worst of the whole thing is my chum is mad at me cause Ma scratched him, and he says that lets him out. He don't go into any more schemes with me. Well, I must be going. Pa is going to have my measure taken for a raw hide, he says, and I have got to stay at home from the sparing match and learn my Sunday school lesson,"

CHAPTER XV.

HIS PA AT THE REUNION.

THE OLD MAN IN MILITARY SPLENDOR—TELLS HOW HE MOWED DOWN THE REBELS—"I AND GRANT"—WHAT IS A SUTLER?—TEN DOLLARS FOR PICKELS!—"LET US HANG HIM!"—THE OLD MAN ON THE RUN—HE STANDS UP TO SUPPER—THE BAD BOY IS TO DIE AT SUNSET.

"I saw your Pa wearing a red, white, and blue badge, and a round red badge, and several other badges, last week, during the reunion," said the grocery man to the bad boy, as the youth asked for a piece of codfish skin to settle coffee with. "He looked like a hero, with his old black hat, with a gold cord around it."

"Yes, he wore all the badges he could get, the first day, but after he blundered into a place where there were a lot of fellows from his own regiment, he took off the badges, and he wasn't very numerous around the boys the rest of the week. But he was lightning on the sham battle," says the boy.

"What was the matter? Didn't the old soldiers treat him well? Didn't they seem to yearn for his society?" asked the grocery man, as the boy was

making a lunch on some sweet crackers in a tin cannister,

"Well, they were not very much mashed on Pa. You see, Pa never gets tired telling us about how he fit in the army. For several years I didn't know what a sutler was, and when Pa would tell about taking a musket that a dead soldier had dropped, and going into the thickest of the fight, and fairly mowing down the rebels in swaths the way they cut hay, I thought he was the greatest man that ever was. Until I was eleven years old I thought Pa had killed men enough to fill the Forest Home cemetery. I thought a sutler was something higher than a general, and Pa used to talk about "I and Grant," and what Sheridan told him, and how Sherman marched with him to the sea, and all that kind of rot, until I wondered why they didn't have pictures of Pa on a white horse, with epaulets on, and a sword. One day at school I told a boy that my Pa killed more men than Grant, and the boy said he didn't doubt it, but he killed them with commissary whiskey. The boy said his Pa was in the same regiment that my Pa was sutler of, and his Pa said my Pa charged him five dollars for a canteen of peppersauce and alcohol and called it whiskey. Then I began to enquire into it, and found out that a sutler was a sort of liquid peanut stand, and that his rank in the army was about the same as a chestnut roaster on the sidewalk here at home. It made me sick, and I never had the same respect for Pa after that. But Pa don't care. He thinks he is a hero, and tried to

get a pension on account of losing a piece of his thumb, but when the officers found he was wounded by the explosion of a can of baked beans, they couldn't give it to him. Pa was down town when the veterans were here, and I was with him, and I saw a lot of old soldiers looking at Pa, and I told him they acted as though they knew him, and he put on his glasses, and said to one of them, "How are you Bill?" The soldier looked at Pa and called the other soldiers, and one said, That's the old duffer that sold me the bottle of brandy peaches at Chickamauga, for three dollars, and they eat a hole through my stummick. Another said, 'He's the cuss that took ten dollars out of my pay for pickles that were put up in *aqua fortis.* Look at the corps badges he has on.' Another said, 'The old whelp! He charged me fifty cents a pound for onions when I had the scurvy at Atlanta.' Another said, 'He beat me out of my wages playing draw poker with a cold deck, and the aces up his sleeve. Let us hang him.' By this time Pa's nerves got unstrung and began to hurt him, and he said he wanted to go home, and when we got around the corner he tore off his badges and threw them in the sewer, and said it was all a man's life was worth to be a veteran now days. He didn't go down town again till next day, and when he heard a band playing he would go around a block. But at the sham battle where there were no veterans hardly, he was all right with the militia boys, and told them how he did when he was in the army. I thought it would be fun to see

THE OLD MAN ON THE RUN.

Pa run, and so when one of the cavalry fellows lost his cap in the charge, and was looking for it, I told the dragoon that the pussy old man over by the fence had stolen his cap. That was Pa. Then I told Pa that the soldier on the horse said he was a rebel, and he was going to kill him. The soldier started after Pa with his sabre drawn, and Pa started to run, and it was funny you bet. The soldier galloped his horse, and yelled, and Pa put in his best licks, and run up the track to where there was a board off the fence, and tried to get through, but he got stuck, and the soldier put the point of his sabre on Pa's pants and pushed, and Pa got through the fence and I guess he ran all the way home. At supper time Pa would not come to the table, but stood up and ate off the side board, and Ma said Pa's shirt was all bloody, and Pa said mor'n fifty of them cavalry men charged on him, and he held them at bay as long as he could, and then retired in good order. This morning a boy told him that I set the cavalry man onto him, and he made me wear two mouse traps on my ears all the forenoon, and he says he will kill me at sunset. I ain't going to be there at sunset, and don't you remember about it. Well, good bye. I have got to go down to the morgue and see them bring in the man that was found on the lake shore, and see if the morgue keeper is drunk this time."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BAD BOY IN LOVE.

ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?—NO GETTING TO HEAVEN ON SMALL POTATOES!—THE BAD BOY HAS TO CHEW COBS—MA SAYS IT'S GOOD FOR A BOY TO BE IN LOVE—LOVE WEAKENS THE BAD BOY—HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO GET MARRIED?—MAD DOG!—NEVER EAT ICE CREAM.

"ARE you a christian?" asked the bad boy of the grocery man, as that gentleman was placing vegetables out in front of the grocery one morning.

"Well, I hope so," answered the grocery man, "I try to do what is right, and hope to wear the golden crown when the time comes to close my books."

"Then how is it that you put out a box of great big sweet potatoes, and when we order some, and they come to the table, they are little bits of things, not bigger than a radish? Do you expect to get to heaven on such small potatoes, when you use big ones for a sign?" asked the boy, as he took out a silk handkerchief and brushed a speck of dust off his nicely blacked shoes.

The grocery man blushed and said he did not mean to take any such advantage of his customers.

He said it must have been a mistake of the boy that delivers groceries.

"Then you must hire the boy to make mistakes, for it has been so every time we have had sweet potatoes for five years," said the boy. "And about green corn. You have a few ears stripped down to show how nice and plump it is, and if we order a dozen ears there are only two that have got any corn on at all, and Pa and Ma gets them, and the rest of us have to chew cobs. Do you hope to wear a crown of glory on that kind of corn?"

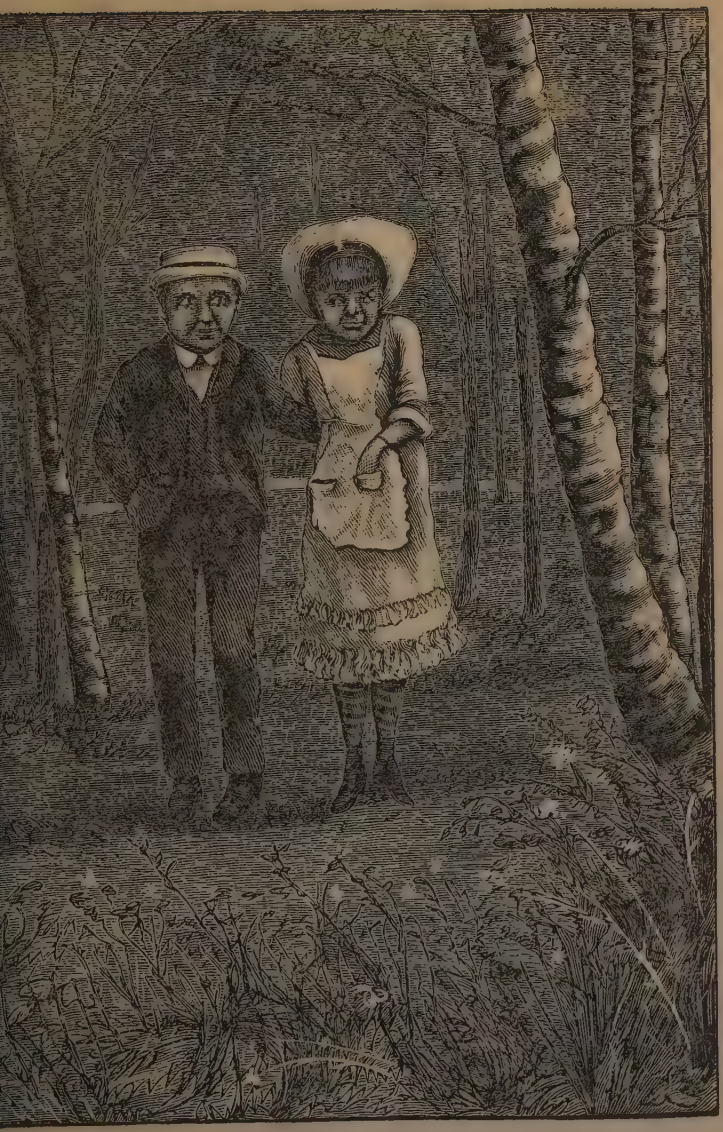
"O, such things will happen," said the grocery man with a laugh, "But don't let's talk about heaven. Let's talk about the other place. How's things over to your house? And say, what's the matter with you. You are all dressed up, and have got a clean shirt on, and your shoes blacked, and I notice your pants are not raveled out so at the bottoms of the legs behind. You are not in love are you?"

"Well, I should smile," said the boy, as he looked in a small mirror on the counter, covered with fly specks. "A girl got mashed on me, and Ma says it is good for a boy who hasn't got no sister, to be in love with a girl, and so I kind of tumbled to myself and she don't go no where without I go with her. I take her to dancing school, and everywhere, and she loves me like a house afire. Say, was you ever in love? Makes a fellow feel queer, don't it? Well sir, the first time I went home with her I put my arm around her. and honest it scared me. It was just

like when you take hold of the handles of a lectric battery, and you can't let go till the man turns the knob. Honest, I was just as weak as a cat. I thought she had needles in her belt and was going to take my arm away, but it was just like it was glued on. I asked her if she felt that way too, and she said she used to, but it was nothing when you got used to it. That made me mad. But she is older than me and knows more about it. When I was going to leave her at the gate, she kissed me, and that was worse than putting my arm around her. By gosh, I trembled all over just like I had chills, but I was as warm as toast. She wouldn't let go for much as a minute, and I was tired as though I had been carrying coal up stairs. I didn't want to go home at all, but she said it would be the best way for me to go home, and come again the next day, and the next morning I went to her house before any of them were up, and her Pa came out to let the cat in, and I asked him what time his girl got up, and he laffed and said I had got it bad, and that I had better go home and not be picked till I got ripe. Say, how much does it cost to get married ?"

"Well, I should say you had got it bad," said the grocery man, as he set out a basket of beets. "Your getting in love will be a great thing for your Pa. You won't have any time to play any more jokes on him."

"O, I guess we can find time to keep Pa from being lonesome. Have you seen him this morning ? You ought to have seen him last night. You see,



THE BAD BOY AND HIS GIRL.

my chum's Pa has got a setter dog stuffed. It is one that died two years ago, and he thought a great deal of it, and he had it stuffed, for a ornament. Well, my chum and me took the dog and put it on our front steps, and took some cotton and fastened it to the dog's mouth so it looked just like froth, and we got behind the door and waited for Pa to come home from the theatre. When Pa started to come up the steps I growled and Pa looked at the dog and said, "Mad dog, by crimus," and he started down the sidewalk, and my chum barked just like a dog, and I "Ki-yi'd" and growled like a dog that gets licked, and you ought to see Pa run. He went around in the alley and was going to get in the basement window, and my chum had a revolver with some blank cartridges, and we went down in the basement and when Pa was trying to open the window my chum began to fire towards Pa. Pa hollered that it was only him, and not a burglar, but after my chum fired four shots Pa run and climbed over the fence, and then we took the dog home and I stayed with my chum all night, and this morning Ma said Pa didn't get home till four o'clock and then a policeman came with him, and Pa talked about mad dogs and being taken for a burglar and nearly killed, and she said she was afraid Pa had took to drinking again, and she asked me if I heard any firing of guns, and I said no, and then she put a wet towel on Pa's head."

"You ought to be ashamed," said the grocery man. "How does your Pa like your being in love

with the girl? Does he seem to encourage you in it?"

"Oh, yes, she was up to our house to borry some tea, and Pa patted her on the cheek and hugged her and said she was a dear little daisy, and wanted her to sit in his lap, but when I wanted him to let me have fifty cents to buy her some ice cream he said that was all nonsense. He said: "Look at your Ma. Eating ice cream when she was a girl was what injured her health for life." I asked Ma about it, and she said Pa never laid out ten cents for ice cream or any luxury for her in all the five years he was sparking her. She says he took her to a circus once but he got free tickets for carrying water for the elephant. She says Pa was tighter than the bark to a tree. I tell you its going to be different with me. If there is anything that girl wants she is going to have it if I have to sell Ma's copper boiler to get the money, What is the use of having wealth if you hoard it up and don't enjoy it? This family will be run on different principles after this, you bet. Say, how much are those yellow wooden pocket combs in the show case? I've a good notion to buy them for her. How would one of them round mirrors, with a zinc cover, do for a present for a girl? There's nothing too good for her."

CHAPTER XVII.

HIS PA FIGHTS HORNETS.

THE OLD MAN LOOKS BAD—THE WOODS OF WAUWATOSA —THE OLD MAN TAKES A NAP—"HELEN DAMNATION"—"HELL IS OUT FOR NOON"—THE LIVER MEDICINE—ITS WONDERFUL EFFECTS—THE BAD BOY IS DRUNK!—GIVE ME A LEMON!—A SIGHT OF THE COMET!—THE HIRED GIRL'S RELIGION.

"Go away from here now," said the grocery man to the bad boy, as he came into the store and was going to draw some cider out of a barrel into a pint measure that had flies in it. "Get right out of this place, and don't let me see you around here until the health officer says you Pa has got over the small pox. I saw him this morning and his face is all covered with postules, and they will have him in the pest house before night. You git," and he picked up a butter tryer and went for the boy who took refuge behind a barrel of onions, and held up his hands as though Jesse James had drawn a bead on him.

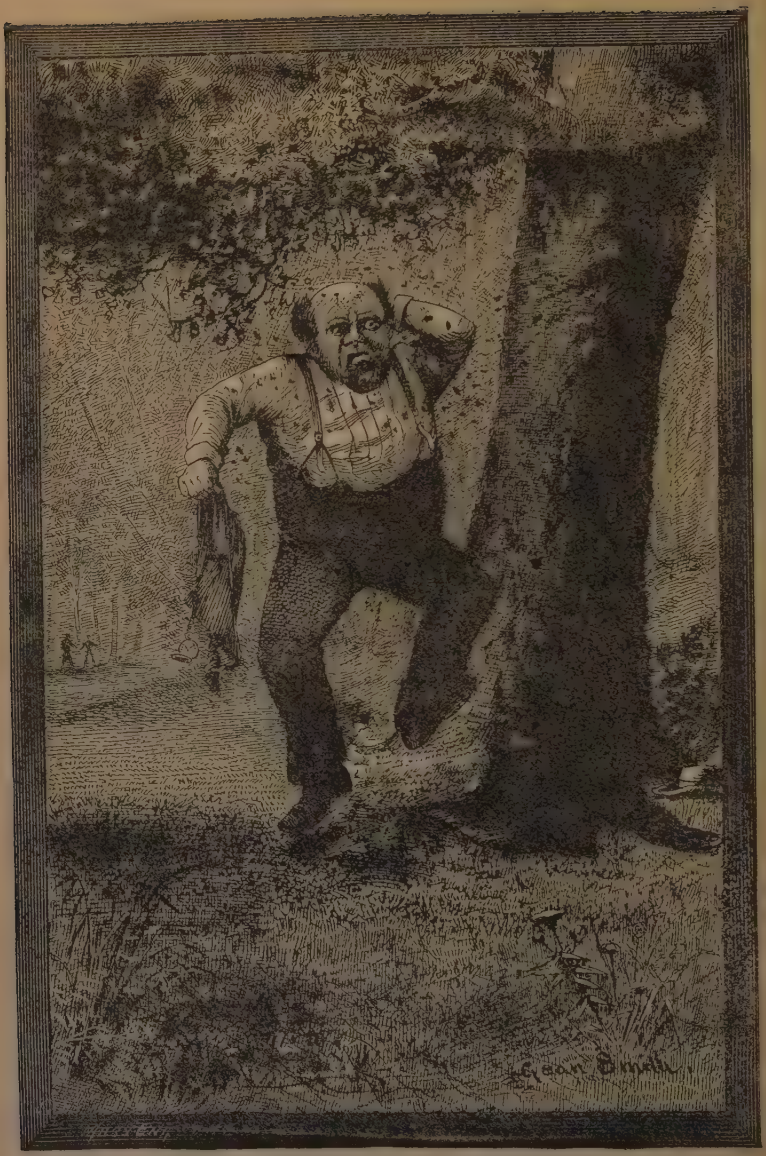
"O, you go and chase yourself. That is not small pox Pa has got. He had a fight with a nest of hornets," said the boy.

"Hornets! Well, I'll be cussed," remarked the grocery man, as he put up the butter tryer, and handed the boy a slice of rotten muskmelon. "How in the world did he get into a nest of hornets? I hope you did not have anything to do with it."

The boy buried his face in the melon, until he looked as though a yellow gash had been cut from his mouth to his ears, and after swallowing the melon, he said: "Well, Pa says I was responsible, and he says that settles it, and I can go my way and he will go his. He said he was willing to overlook everything I had done to make his life unbearable, but steering him onto a nest of hornets, and then getting drunk, was too much, and I can go."

"What, you haven't been drunk," says the grocery man. "Great heavens, that will kill your poor old father."

"O, I guess it won't kill him very much. He has been getting drunk for twenty years, and he says he is healthier to-day than he ever was, since his liver has got to working again. You see, Monday was a regular Indian summer day, and Pa said he would take me and my chum out in the woods to gather hickory nuts, if we would be good. I said I would, and my chum said he would, and we got a couple of bags and went away out to Wauwatosa, in the woods. We clubbed the trees and got more nuts than anybody, and had a lunch, and Pa was just enjoying his relidgin first rate. While Pa was taking a nap under a tree, my chum and me looked around and found a hornets' nest on the lower limb



"HELEN DAMNATION."

of the tree we were sitting under, and my chum said it would be a good joke to get a pole and run it into the hornet's nest, and then run. Honest, I didn't think about Pa being under the tree, and I went into a field and got a hop pole, and put the small end up into the nest, and gouged the nest a couple of times, and when the boss hornet came out of the hole and looked sassy, and then looked back in the hole and whistled to the other hornets to come out and have a circus, and they began to come out, my chum and me run and climbed over a fence, and got behind a pile of hop poles that was stacked up. I guess the hornets saw my Pa just as quick as they got out of the nest, cause pretty soon we heard Pa call to 'Helen Damnation,' or some woman we didn't know, and then he took his coat, that he had been using for a pillow, and whipped around, and he slapped hisself on the shoulders, and then took the lunch basket and pounded around like he was crazy, and bime-by he started on a run towards town, holding his pants up, cause his suspenders was hanging down on his hips, and I never see a fat man run so, and fan himself with a basket. We could hear him yell, 'come on, boys. Hell is out for noon,' and he went over a hill, and we didn't see him any more. We waited till near dark because we was afraid to go after the bags of nuts till the hornets had gone to bed, and then we came home. The bags were awful heavy, and I think it was real mean in Pa to go off and leave us, and not help carry the bags."

"I swan," says the grocery man, "You are too mean to live. But what about your getting drunk?"

"O, I was going to tell you. Pa had a bottle of liver medicine in his coat pocket, and when he was whipping his hornets the bottle dropped out, and I picked it up to carry it home to him. My chum wanted to smell of the liver medicine, so he took out the cork and it smelled just like in front of a liquor store on East Water street, and my chum said his liver was bad, too, and he took a swaller, and he said he should think it was enough to cut a feller's liver up in slices, but it was good, and then I had a peculiar feeling in my liver, and my chum said his liver felt better after he took a swaller, and and so I took a swaller, and it was the offulest liver remedy I ever tasted. It scorched my throat just like the diptheria, but it beats diptheria, or sore throat, all to pieces, and my chum and me laffed, we was so tickled. Did you ever take liver medicine? You know how it makes you feel as if your liver had got on top of your lights, and like you wanted to jump and holler. Well, sir, honest that liver medicine made me dance a jig on the viaduct bridge, and an old soldier from the soldiers' home came along and asked us what was the matter, and we told him about our livers, and the liver medicine, and showed him the bottle, and he said he sposed he had the worst liver in the world, and said the doctors at the home, couldn't cure him. It's a mean boy that won't help a nold vetran cure his liver, so I told him to try Pa's liver remedy, and he took

a regular cow swaller, and said, 'here's to your livers, boys.' He must have a liver bigger nor a cow's, and I guess it is better now.

"Then my liver begun to feel curus again, and my chum said his liver was getting torpid some more, and we both took another dose, and started home and we got generous, and give our nuts all away to some boys. Say, does liver medicine make a feller give away all he has got? We kept taking medicine every five blocks, and we locked arms and went down a back street and sung 'O it is a glorious thing to be a pirut king,' and when we got home my head felt bigger nor a washtub and I thought p'raps my liver had gone to my head, and Pa came to the door with his face tied up in towels, and some yellow stuff on the towels that smelled like anarchy, and I slapped him on the shoulder and shouted, 'Hello, Gov., how's your liver,' and gave him the bottle, and it was empty, and he asked me if we had been drinking that medicine and he said he was ruined, and I told him he could get some more down to the saloon, and he took hold of my collar and I lammed him in the ear, and he bounced me up stairs, and then I turned pale, and had cramps, and I didn't remember any more till I woke up and the doctor was over me, and Pa and Ma looked scared, and the Doc. had a tin thing like you draw water out of a country cistern, only smaller, and Ma said if it hadn't been for the stomach pump she wouldn't have had any little boy, and I looked at the knobs on Pa's face and I laffed and asked Pa if he got into

the hornets, too. Then the Doc. laffed, and Ma cried, and Pa swore, and I groaned, and got sick again, and then they let me go to sleep again, and this morning I had the offulest headache, and Pa's face looks like he had fell on a picket fence. When I got out I went to my chum's house to see if they had got him pumped out, and his Ma drove me out with a broom, and she says I will ruin every boy in the neighborhood. Pa says I was drunk and kicked him in the groin when he fired me up stairs, and I asked him how I could be drunk just taking medicine for my liver, and he said go to the devil, and I came over here. Say, give me a lemon to settle my stomach."

"But, look-a-here," says the grocery man, as he gave the boy a little dried up lemon, about as big as a prune, and told him he was a terror, "what is the matter of your eye winkers and your hair? They seem to be burned off,"

"O, thunder, didn't Pa tell you about the comet exploding and burning us all? That was the worst thing since the flood, when Noar run the excursion boat from Kalamazoo to Mount Ararat. You see we had been reading about the comet, which is visible at four o'clock in the morning, and I heard Pa tell the hired girl to wake him and Ma up when she got up to set the pancakes and go to early mass so they could see the comet. The hired girl is a Cathlick, and she don't make no fuss about it, but she has got more good, square relidgin than a dozen like Pa. It makes a good deal of difference how relidgin affects

different people, don't it. Now Pa's relidgin makes him wild, and he wants to kick my pants, and pull my hair, but the hired girl's relidgin makes her want to hug me, if I am abused, and she puts anarchy on my bruises, and gives me pie. Pa wouldn't get up at four o'clock in the morning to go to early mass, unless he could take a fish pole along and some angel worms. The hired girl prays when no one sees her but God, but Pa wants to get a church full of sister-in', and pray loud, as though he was an auctioneer selling tin razors. Say, it beats all what a difference liver medicine has on two people, too. Now that hickory nut day, when me and my chum got full of Pa's liver medicine, I felt so good natured I gave my hickory nuts away to the children, and wanted to give my coat and pants to a poor tramp, but my chum, who ain't no bigger'n me, got on his ear and wanted to kick the socks off a little girl who was going home from school. It's queer, ain't it. Well, about the comet. When I heard Pa tell the hired girl to wake him and Ma up, I told her to wake me up about half an hour before she waked Pa up, and then I got my chum to stay with me, and we made a comet to play on Pa. You see my room is right over Pa's room, and I got two lengths of stove pipe and covered them all over with phosphorus, so they looked just as bright as a comet. Then we got two Roman candles and a big sky rocket, and we were going to touch off the Roman candles and the sky rocket just as Pa and Ma got to looking at the comet. I didn't know that a sky rocket would kick back,

did you? Well, you'd a dide to see that comet. We tied a piece of white rubber garden hose to the stove pipe for a tail and went to bed, and when the girl woke us up we laid for Pa and Ma. Pretty soon we heard Pa's window open, and I looked out, and Pa and Ma had their heads and half their bodies out of the window. They had their night shirts on and looked just like the pictures of Millerites waiting for the world to come to an end. Pa looked up and seed the stove pipe and he said:

"Hanner, for God's sake, look up there. That is the damest comet I ever see. It is as bright as day. See the tail of it. Now that is worth getting up to see."

Just then my chum lit the two Roman candles and I touched off the rocket, and that's where my eye winkers went. The rocket busted the joints of the stove pipe, and they fell down on Pa, but Ma got her head inside before the comet struck, and wasn't hurt, but one length of stove pipe struck Pa endways on the neck and almost cut a biscuit out of him, and the fire and sparks just poured down in his hair, and burned his night shirt. Pa was scart. He thought the world was coming to an end, and the window came down on his back, and he began to sing, "Earth's but a desert drear, Heaven is my home." I see he was caught in the window, and I went down stairs to put out the fire on his night shirt, and put up the window to let him in, and he said, "My boy, your Ma and I are going to Heaven, but I fear you will go to the bad place," and I told him I would

take my chances, and he better put on his pants if he was going anywhere that there would be liable to be ladies present, and when he got his head in Ma told him the world was not coming to an end, but somebody had been setting off fireworks, and she said she guessed it was their dear little boy, and when I saw Pa feeling under the bed for a bed slat I got up stairs pretty previous now, and don't you forget it, and Ma put cold cream on where the sparks burnt Pa's shirt, and Pa said another day wouldn't pass over his head before he had me in the Reform School. Well, if I go to the Reform School, somebody's got to pay attention, you can bet your liver. A boy can't have any fun these days without everybody thinks he is a heathen. What hurt did it do to play comet? It's a mean father that wont stand a little scorchin' in the interests of science."

The boy went out, scratching the place where his eye winkers were, and then the grocery man knew what it was that caused the fire engines to be out around at four o'clock in the morning, looking for a fire.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HIS PA GOES HUNTING.

MUTILATED JAW — THE OLD MAN HAS TAKEN TO SWEARING AGAIN—OUT WEST DUCK SHOOTING—HIS COAT-TAIL SHOT OFF—SHOOTS AT A WILD GOOSE — THE GUN KICKS!—THROWS A CHAIR AT HIS SON—THE ASTONISHED SHE DEACON.

"WHAT has your Pa got his jaw tied up for, and what makes his right eye so black and blue," asked the grocery man of the bad boy, as the boy came to bring some butter back that was strong enough to work on the street. "You haven't hurt your poor old Pa, have you?"

"O, his jaw is all right now. You ought to have seen him when the gun was engaged in kicking him," says the boy as he set the butter plate on the cheese box.

"Well, tell us about it. What had the gun against your Pa? I guess it was the son-of-a-gun that kicked him," said the grocery man, as he winked at a servant girl who came in with her apron over her head, after two cents worth of yeast.

"I'll tell you, if you will keep watch down street for Pa. He says he is dammed if he will stand this foolishness any longer."

"What, does your father swear, while he is on probation?"

"Swear! Well, I should cackle. You ought to have heard him when he come to, and spit out the loose teeth. You see, since Pa quit drinking he is a little nervous, and the doctor said he ought to go out somewhere and get bizness off his mind, and hunt ducks, and row a boat, and get strength, and Pa said shooting ducks was just in his hand, and for me to go and borrow a gun, and I could go along and carry game. So I got a gun at the gun store, and some cartridges, and we went away out west on the cars, more than fifty miles, and stayed two days. You ought to seen Pa. He was just like a boy that was sick, and couldn't go to school. When we got out by the lake he jumped up and cracked his heels together, and yelled. I thought he was crazy, but he was only cunning. First I scared him nearly to death by firing off the gun behind him, as we were going along the bank, and blowing off a piece of his coat-tail. I knew it wouldn't hurt him, but he turned pale and told me to lay down that gun, and he picked it up and carried it the rest of the way, and I was offul glad cause it was a heavy gun. His coat-tail smelled like when you burn a rag to make the air in the room stop smelling so, all the forenoon. You know Pa is a little near sighted but he don't believe it, so I got some of the wooden decoy ducks that the hunters use, and put them in the lake, and you ought to see Pa get down on his belly and crawl through the grass, to get up close to them.

He shot twenty times at the wooden ducks, and wanted me to go in and fetch them out, but I told him I was no retriever dog. Then Pa was mad, and said all he brought me along for was to carry game, and I had come near shooting his hind leg off, and now I wouldn't carry ducks. While he was coaxing me to go in the cold water without my pants on, I heard some wild geese squawking, and then Pa heard them, and he was excited. He said you lay down behind the muskrat house, and I will get a goose. I told him he couldn't kill a goose with that fine shot, and I gave him a large cartridge the gun store man loaded for me, with a handful of powder in, and I told Pa it was a goose cartridge, and Pa put it in the gun. The geese came along, about a mile high, squawking, and Pa aimed at a dark cloud and fired. Well, I was offul scared, I thought I had killed him. The gun just rared up and come down on his jaw, shoulder and everywhere, and he went over a log and struck on his shoulder, the gun flew out of his hands, and Pa he laid there on his neck, with his feet over the log, and that was the first time he didn't scold me since he got relidgin. I felt offul sorry, and got some dirty water in my hat and poured it down his neck, and laid him out, and pretty soon he opened his eyes and asked if any of the passengers got ashore alive. Then his eye swelled out so it looked like a blue door-knob, and Pa felt of his jaw, and asked if the engineer and fireman jumped off, or if they went down with the engine. He seemed dazed, and then he saw the gun,

THE GUN REARED UP.

and he said take the dam thing away, it is going to kick me again. Then he got his senses and wanted to know if he killed a goose, and I told him no, but he nearly broke one's jaw, and then he said the gun kicked him when it went off, and he laid down and the gun kept kicking him more than twenty times, when he was trying to sleep. He went back to the tavern where we were stopping and wouldn't touch the gun, but made me lug it. He told the tavern keeper that he fell over a wire fence, but I think he began to suspect, after he spit the loose teeth out, that the gun was loaded for bear. I suppose he will kill me some day. Don't you think he will ?"

"Any coroner's jury would let him off and call it justifiable, if he should kill you. You must be a lunatic. Has your Pa talked much about it since you got back ?" asked the grocery man.

"Not much. You see he can't talk much without breaking his jaw. But he was able to throw a chair at me. You see I thought I would joke him a little, cause when anybody feels bad a joke kind of livens em up, so we were talking about Pa's liver, and Ma said he seemed to be better since his liver had become more active, and I said, 'Pa, when you was a rolling over with the gun chasing you, and kicking you every round, your liver was active enough, cause it was on top half the time.' Then Pa throwed the chair at me. He says he believes I knew that cartridge was loaded. But you ought to seen the fun when an old she deacon of Pa's church called to collect some money to send to the heathens.

Ma wasn't in, so Pa went to the parlor to stand her off, and when she see that Pa's face was tied up, and his eye was black, and his jaw cracked, she held up both hands and said, 'O, my dear brother, you have been drunk again. You have backslid. You will have to go back and commence your probation all over again, and Pa said, 'Damfido,' and the old she deacon screamed and went off without getting enough money to buy a deck of round cornered cards for the heathen. Say, what does 'damfido,' mean? Pa has some of the queerest expressions, since he joined the church."

CHAPTER XIX.

HIS PA IS "NISHIATED."

ARE YOU A MASON?—NO HARM TO PLAY AT LODGE—WHY GOATS ARE KEPT IN STABLES—THE BAD BOY GETS THE GOAT UP STAIRS—THE GRAND BUMPER DEGREE—KYAN PEPPER ON THE GOAT'S BEARD—"BRING FORTH THE ROYAL BUMPER"—THE GOAT ON THE RAMPAGE.

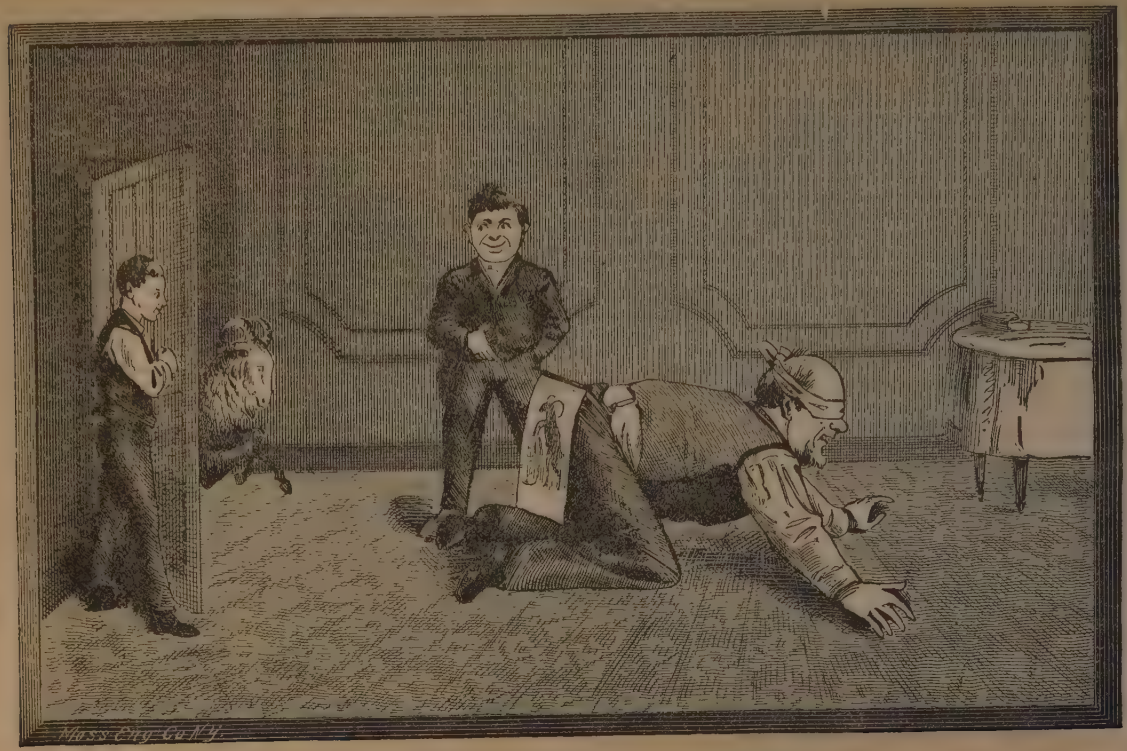
"SAY, are you a Mason, or a nodfellow, or anything?" asked the bad boy of the grocery man, as he went to the cinnamon bag on the shelf and took out a long stick of cinnamon bark to chew.

"Why, yes, of course I am, but what set you to thinking of that," asked the grocery man, as he went to the desk and charged the boy's father with a half a pound of cinnamon.

"Well, do the goats bunt when you nishiate a fresh candidate?"

"No, of course not. The goats are cheap ones, that have no life, and we muzzle them, and put pillows over their heads, so they can't hurt anybody," says the grocery man, as he winked at a brother Odd Fellow who was seated on a sugar barrel, looking mysterious, "But why do you ask?"

O, nothin, only I wish me and my chum had muzzled our goat with a pillow. Pa would have enjoyed his becoming a member of our lodge better. You see, Pa had been telling us how much good the Masons and Odd Fellers did, and said we ought to try and grow up good so we could jine the lodges when we got big, and I asked Pa if it would do any hurt for us to have a play lodge in my room, and purtend to nishiate, and Pa said it wouldn't do any hurt. He said it would improve our minds and learn us to be men. So my chum and me borried a goat that lives in a livery stable. Say, did you know they keep a goat in a livery stable so the horses won't get sick? They get used to the smell of the goat, and after that nothing can make them sick but a glue factory. I wish my girl boarded in a livery stable, then she would get used to the smell. I went home with her from church Sunday night, and the smell of the goat on my clothes made her sick to her stummick, and she acted just like an excursion on the lake, and said if I didn't go and bury myself and take the smell out of me she wouldn't never go with me again. She was just as pale as a ghost, and the prespiration on her lip was just zif she had been hit by a street sprinkler. You see my chum and me had to carry the goat up to my room when Pa and Ma was out riding, and he blatted so we had to tie a handkerchief around his nose, and his feet made such a noise on the floor that we put some baby's socks on his feet. Gosh, how frowy a goat smells, don't it? I should think you Masons must have strong



"BRING FORTH THE ROYAL BUMPER!"

stummix, Why don't you have a skunk or a mule for a trade mark. Take a mule, and annoint it with limburg cheese and you could initiate and make a candidate smell just as bad as with a gosh darn mildewed goat.

"Well, my chum and me practiced with that goat until he could bunt the picture of a goat every time. We borried a buck beer sign from a saloon man and hung it on the back of a chair, and the goat would hit it every time. That night Pa wanted to know what we were doing up in my room, and I told him we were playing lodge, and improving our minds, and Pa said that was right, there was nothing that did boys of our age half so much good as to imitate men, and store by useful nollidge. Then my chum asked Pa if he didn't want to come up and take the grand bumper degree, and Pa laffed and said he didn't care if he did, just to encourage us boys in innocent pastime, that was so improving to our intellex. We had shut the goat up in a closet in my room, and he had got over blatting, so we took off the handkerchief, and he was eating some of my paper collars, and skate straps. We went up stairs, and told Pa to come up pretty soon and give three distinct raps, and when we asked him who comes there he must say, 'a pilgrim who wants to join your ancient order and ride the goat.' Ma wanted to come up too, but we told her if she come in it would break up the lodge, cause a woman couldn't keep a secret, and we didn't have any side saddle for the goat. Say, if you never tried it, the next

time you nitiate a man in your Mason's lodge you sprinkle a little kyan pepper on the goat's beard just afore you turn him loose. You can get three times as much fun to the square inch of goat. You wouldn't think it was the same goat. Well, we got all fixed and Pa rapped, and we let him in and told him he must be blindfolded, and he got on his knees a laffing and I tied a towel around his eyes, and then I turned him around and made him get down on his hands also, and then his back was right towards the closet door, and I put the buck beer sign right against Pa's clothes. He was a laffing all the time, and said we boys were as full of fun as they made 'em, and we told him it was a solemn occasion, and we wouldn't permit no levity, and if he didn't stop laffing we couldn't give him the grand bumper degree. Then evergthing was ready, and my chum had his hand on the closet door, and some kyan pepper in his other hand, and I asked Pa in low bass tones if he felt as though he wanted to turn back, or if he had nerve enough to go ahead and take the degree. I warned him that it was full of dangers, as the goat was loaded for bear, and told him he yet had time to retrace his steps if he wanted to. He said he wanted the whole bizness, and we could go ahead with the menagerie. Then I said to Pa that if he had decided to go ahead, and not blame us for the consequences, to repeat after me the following: 'Bring forth the Royal Bumper and let him Bump.'

"Pa repeated the words, and my chum sprinkled the kyan pepper on the goat's moustache, and he

"BUMPED !"

sneezed once and looked sassy, and then he see the lager beer goat raring up, and he started for it, just like a cow catcher, and blatted. Pa is real fat, but he knew he got hit, and he grunted, and said, 'Hell's-fire, what you boys doin'?' and then the goat gave him another degree, and Pa pulled off the towel and got up and started for the stairs, and so did the goat, and Ma was at the bottom of the stairs listening, and when I looked over the banisters Pa and Ma and the goat were all in a heap, and Pa was yelling murder, and Ma was screaming fire, and the goat was blatting, and sneezing, and bunting, and the hired girl came into the hall and the goat took after her and she crossed herself just as the goat struck her and said, 'Howly mother protect me!' and went down stairs the way we boys slide down hill, with both hands on herself, and the goat rared up and blatted, and Pa and Ma went into their room and shut the door, and then my chum and me opened the front door and drove the goat out. The minister, who comes to see Ma every three times a week, was just ringing the bell and the goat thought he wanted to be nishiated too, and gave him one, for luck, and then went down the sidewalk, blatting, and sneezing, and the minister came in the parlor and said he was stabbed, and then Pa came out of his room with his suspenders hanging down, and he didn't know the minister was there, and he said cuss words, and Ma cried and told Pa he would go to hell sure, and Pa said he didn't care, he would kill that kussid goat

afore he went, and I told Pa the minister was in the parlor, and he and Ma went down and said the weather was propitious for a revival, and it seemed as though an outpouring of the spirit was about to be vouchsafed to His people, and none of them sot down but Ma, cause the goat didn't hit her, and while they were talking relidgin, with their mouths, and kussin the goat inwardly, my chum and me adjourned the lodge, and I went and stayed with him all night, and I haven't been home since. But I don't believe Pa will lick me, cause he said he would not hold us responsible for the consequences. He ordered the goat hisself, and we filled the order, don't you see, ? Well, I guess I will go and sneak in the back way, and find out from the hired girl how the land lays. She won't go back on me, cause the goat was not loaded for hired girls. She just happened to get in at the wrong time. Good bye, sir, Remember and give your goat kyan pepper in your lodge."

As the boy went away, and skipped over the back fence, the grocery man said to his brother odd fellow, "If that boy don't beat the devil then I never saw one that did. The old man ought to have him sent to a lunatic asylum."

CHAPTER XX.

HIS GIRL GOES BACK ON HIM.

THE GROCERY MAN IS AFRAID—BUT THE BAD BOY IS A WRECK!—"MY GIRL HAS SHOOK ME!"—THE BAD BOY'S HEART IS BROKEN—STILL HE ENJOYS A BIT OF FUN—COD-LIVER OIL ON THE PANCAKES—THE HIRED GIRLS MADE VICTIMS—THE BAD BOY VOWS VENGEANCE ON HIS GIRL AND THE TELEGRAPH MESSENGER.

"Now you git right away from here," said the grocery man to the bad boy, as he came in with a hungry look on his face, and a wild light in his eye. "I am afraid of you. I wouldn't be surprised to see you go off half cocked and blow us all up. I think you are a devil. You may have a billy goat, or a shot gun, or a bottle of poison concealed about you. Condemn you, the police ought to muzzle you. You will kill somebody yet. Here take a handful of prunes and go off somewhere and enjoy yourself, and keep away from here," and the grocery man went on sorting potatoes, and watching the haggard face of the boy. "What ails you anyway?" he added, as the boy refused the prunes, and seemed to be sick to the stomach.

"O, I am a wreck," said the boy, as he grated his teeth, and looked wicked. "You see before you a shadow. I have drank of the sweets of life, and now only the dregs remain. I look back at the happiness of the past two weeks, during which I have been permitted to gaze into the fond blue eyes of my loved one, and carry her rubbers to school for her to wear home when it rained, to hear the sweet words that fell from her lips as she lovingly told me I was a terror, and as I think it is all over, and that I shall never again place my arm around her waist, I feel as if the world had been kicked off its base and was whirling through space, liable to be knocked into a cocked hat, and I don't care a darn. My girl has shook me."

"Sho! You don't say so," says the grocery man as he threw a rotten potato into a basket of good ones that were going to the orphan asylum. "Well, she showed sense. You would have blown her up, or broken her neck, or something. But don't feel bad. You will soon find another girl that will discount her, and you will forget this one."

"Never!" said the the boy, as he nibbled at a piece of codfish that he had picked off. "I shall never allow my affections to become entwined about another piece of calico. It unmans me, sir. Henceforth I am a hater of the whole girl race. From this out I shall harbor revenge in my heart, and no girl can cross my path and live. I want to grow up to become a he school ma'am, or a he milliner, or something, where I can grind girls into the dust

under the heel of a terrible despotism, and make them sue for mercy. To think that girl, on whom I have lavished my heart's best love and over thirty cents, in the past two weeks, could let the smell of a goat on my clothes come between us, and break off an acquaintance that seemed to be the forerunner of a happy future, and say "ta-ta" to me, and go off to dancing school with a telegraph messenger boy who wears a sleeping car porter uniform, is too much, and my heart is broken. I will lay for that messenger some night, when he is delivering a message in our ward, and I will make him think lightning has struck the wire and run in on his bench. O, you don't know anything about the woe there is in this world. You never loved many people, did you?"

The grocery man admitted he never loved very hard, but he knew a little something about it from an aunt of his, who got mashed on a Chicago drummer. "But your father must be having a rest while your whole mind is occupied with your love affair," said he.

"Yes," says the boy, with a vacant look, "I take no interest in the pleasure of the chase any more, though I did have a little quiet fun this morning at the breakfast table. You see Pa is the contrariest man ever was. If I complain that anything at the table don't taste good, Pa says it is all right. This morning I took the syrup pitcher and emptied out the white syrup and put in some cod liver oil that Ma is taking for her cough. I put some on my pan-

cakes and pretended to taste of it, and I told Pa the syrup was sour and not fit to eat. Pa was mad in a second, and he poured out some on his pancakes, and said I was getting too confounded particular. He said the syrup was good enough for him, and he sopped his pancakes in it and fired some down his neck. He is a gaul durned hypocrite, that's what he is. I could see by his face that the cod liver oil was nearly killing him, but he said that syrup was all right, and if I didn't eat mine he would break my back, and by gosh, I had to eat it, and Pa said he guessed he hadn't got much appetite, and he would just drink a cup of coffee and eat a donut.

"I like to dide, and that is one thing, I think, that makes this disappointment in love harder to bear. But I felt sorry for Ma. Ma ain't got a very strong stummick, and when she got some of that cod liver oil in her mouth she went right up stairs, sicker'n a horse, and Pa had to help her, and she had neuralgia all the morning. I eat pickles to take the taste out of my mouth, and then I laid for the hired girls. They eat too much syrup, anyway, and when they got on to that cod liver oil, and swallowed a lot of it, one of them, a nirish girl, she got up from the table and put her hand on her corset, and said, "howly Jaysus," and went out in the kitchen, as pale as Ma is when she has powder on her face, and the other girl who is Dutch, she swallowed a pancake and said, "Mine Gott, vas de matter from me," and she went out and leaned on the coal bin, then they talked Irish and Dutch, and got clubs, and

started to look for me, and I thought I would come over here.

"The whole family is sick, but it is not from love, like my illness, and they will get over it, while I shall fill an early grave, but not till I have made that girl and the telegraph messenger wish they were dead. Pa and I are going to Chicago next week, and I'll bet we'll have some fun. Pa says I need a change of air, and I think he is going to try and lose me. It's a cold day when I get left anywhere that I can't find my way back, Well, good bye, old rotten potatoes."

CHAPTER XXI.

HE AND HIS PA IN CHICAGO.

NOTHING LIKE TRAVELING TO GIVE TONE—LAUGHING IN THE WRONG PLACE—A DIABOLICAL PLOT—HIS PA ARRESTED AS A KIDNAPPER—THE NUMBERS ON THE DOORS CHANGED — THE WRONG ROOM—"NOTHIN THE MAZZER WITH ME, PET!"—THE TELL-TALE HAT.

"WHAT is this I hear about your Pa's being arrested in Chicago," said the grocery man to the bad boy, as he came in with a can for kerosene and a jug for vinegar.

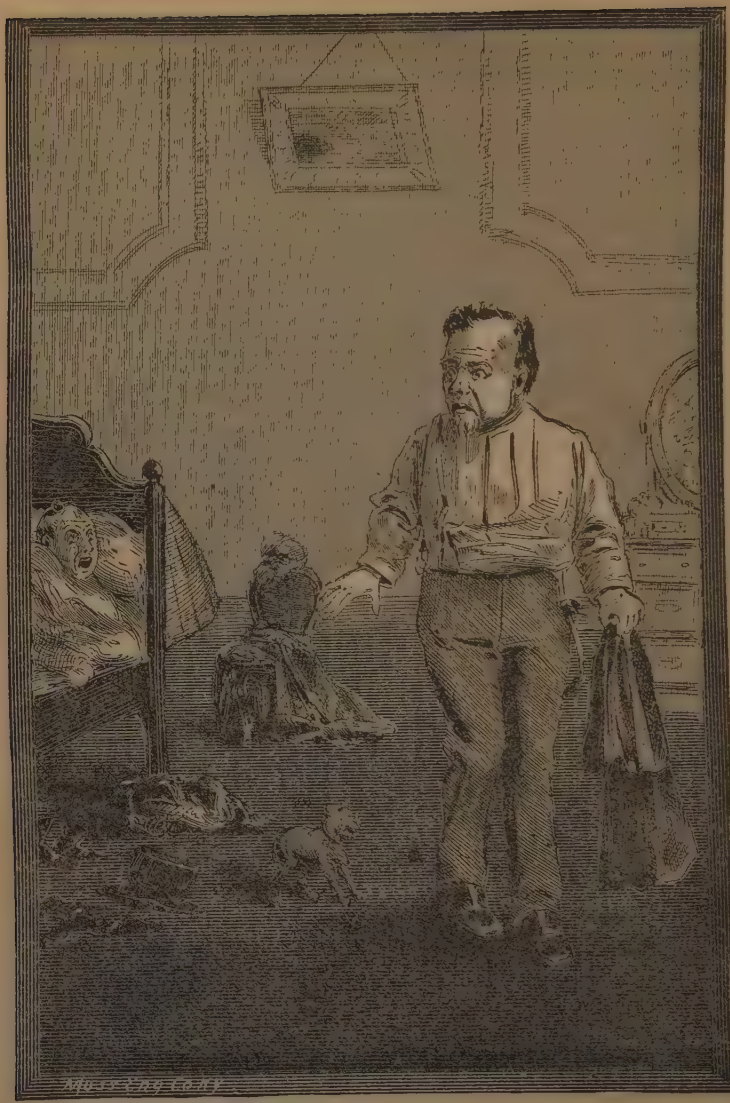
"Well, it was true, but the police let him go after they hit him a few licks and took him to the station," said the boy, as he got the vinegar into the kerosene can, and the kerosene in the jug. "You see, Pa and me went down there to stay over night, and have fun. Ma said she druther we would be away then not when they were cleaning house, and Pa thought it would do me good to travel, and sort of get tone, and he thought maybe I'd be better, and not play jokes, but I guess it is born in me. Do you know I actually think of mean things to do when I am in the most solemn places. They took me to a funeral

once, and I got to thinking what a stampede there would be if the corpse would come to life and sit up in the coffin, and I snickered right out, and Pa took me out doors and kicked my pants. I don't think he orter kicked me for it, cause I didn't think of it a purpose. Such things have occurred, and I have read about them, and a poor boy ought to be allowed to think, hadn't he?"

"Yes, but what about his being arrested. Never mind the funeral," said the grocery man, as he took his knife and picked some of the lead out of the weights on the scales.

"We went down on the cars, and Pa had a headache, because he had been out all night electioneering for the prohibition ticket, and he was cross, and scolded me, and once he pulled my ear cause I asked him if he knew the girl he was winking at in a seat across the aisle. I didn't enjoy myself much, and some men were talking about kidnapping children, and it gave me an ijee, and just before I got to Chicago I went after a drink of water at the other end of the car, and I saw a man who looked as though he wouldn't stand any fooling, and I whispered to him and told him that the bald-headed man I was sitting with was taking me away from my home in Milwaukee, and I mistrusted he was going to make a thief or a pickpocket of me. I said 's-h-h-h,' and told him not to say anything or the man would maul me. Then I went back to the seat and asked Pa to buy me a gold watch, and he looked mad and cuffed me on the ear. The man that I whispered too got

talking with some other men, and when we got off the cars at Chicago a policeman came up to Pa and took him by the neck and said, 'Mr. Kidnapper, I guess we will run you in.' Pa was mad and tried to jerk away, and the cop choked him, and another cop came along and helped, and the passengers crowded around and wanted to lynch Pa, and Pa wanted to know what they meant, and they asked him where he stole the kid, and he said I was his kid, and asked me if I wasn't, and I looked scarred, as though I was afraid to say no, and I said 'Y-e-s S-e-r, I guess so.' Then the police said the poor boy was scart, and they would take us both to the station, and they made Pa walk spry, and when he held back they jerked him along. He was offul mad and said he would make somebody smart for this, and I hoped it wouldn't be me. At the station they charged Pa with kidnapping a boy from Milwaukee, and he said it was a lie, and I was his boy, and I said of course I was, and the boss asked who told the cops Pa was a kidnapper, and they said 'damfino,' and then the boss told Pa he could go, but not to let it occur again, and Pa and me went away. I looked so sorry for Pa that he never tumbled to me, that I was to blame. We walked around town all day, and went to the stores, and at night Pa was offul tired, and he put me to bed in the tavern and he went out to walk around and get rested. I was not tired, and I walked all around the hotel. I thought Pa had gone to a theatre, and that made me mad, and I thought I would play a joke on him. Our room was



IN THE WRONG ROOM.

210 and the next was 212, and there was a old maid with a scotch terrier occupied 212. I saw her twice and she called me names, cause she thought I wanted to steal her dog. That made me mad at her, and so I took my jack knife and drew the tacks out of the tin thing that the numbers were painted on, and put the old maid's number on our door and our number on her door, and then I went to bed. I tried to keep awake, so as to help Pa if he had any difficulty, but I guess I got asleep, but woke up when the dog barked. If the dog had not woke me up, the woman's scream would, and if that hadn't, Pa would. You see, Pa came home from the theatre about 'leven, and he had been drinking. He says everybody drinks when they go to Chicago, even the minister. Pa looked at the numbers on the doors all along the hall till he found 210, and walked right in and pulled off his coat and threw it on the lounge where the dog was. The old maid was asleep, but the dog barked, and Pa said, 'That cussed boy has bought a dog.' and he kicked the dog, and then the old maid said, 'what is the matter pet?'

"Pa laffed and said, 'Nothin the mazzer with *me*, pet,' and then you ought to have heard the yelling. The old maid covered her head and kicked and yelled, and the dog snarled and bit Pa on the pants, and Pa had his vest off and his suspenders unbuttoned, and he got scared and took his coat and vest and went out in the hall, and I opened our door and told Pa he was in the wrong room, and he said he guessed he knowed it, and he came in our room and

I locked the door, and then the bell boy, and the porter, and the clerk came up to see what ailed the old maid, and she said a burglar got in the room, and they found Pa's hat on the lounge, and they took it and told her to be quiet and they would find the burglar. Pa was so scared that he sweat like everything, and the bed was offul warm, and he pretended to go to sleep, but he was wondering how he could get his hat back. In the morning I told him it would be hard work to explain it to Ma how he happened to get into the wrong room, and he said it wasn't necessary to say anything about it to Ma.

"Then he gave me five dollars to go out and buy him a new hat, and he said I might keep the change if I would not mention it when I got home, and I got him one for ten shillings, and we took the eight o'clock train in the morning and came home, and I spose the Chicago detectives are trying to fit Pa's hat onto a burglar. Pa seemed offully relieved when we got across the state line into Wisconsin. But you'd a dide to see him come out of that old lady's room with his coat and vest on his arm, and his suspenders hanging down, looking scart. He dassent lick me any more or I'll tell Ma where Pa left his hat."

CHAPTER XXII.

HIS PA IS DISCOURAGED.

"I AIN'T NO JONER!"—THE STORY OF THE ANCIENT PROPHET—THE SUNDAY SCHOOL FOLKS GO BACK ON THE BAD BOY—CAGED CATS—A COMMITTEE MEETING—A REMARKABLE CAT-ASTROPHE! —"THAT BOY BEATS HELL!"—BASTING THE BAD BOY—THE HOT-WATER-IN-THE SPONGE TRICK.

"SAY, you leave here mighty quick," said the grocery man to the bad boy, as he came in, with his arm in a sling, and backed up againt the stove to get warm. "Everything has gone wrong since you got to coming here, and I think you are a regular Jonah. I find sand in my sugar, kerosene in the butter, the codfish is all picked off, and there is something wrong every time you come here. Now you leave."

"I aint no Joner," said the boy as he wiped his nose on his coat sleeve, and reached into a barrel for a snow apple. "I never swallered no whale. Say, do you believe that story about Joner being in the whale's belly, all night? I don't. The minister was telling about it at Sunday school last Sunday, and asked me what I thought Joner was doing while he was in there, and I told him I interpreted

the story this way, that the whale was fixed up inside with upper and lower berths, like a sleeping car, and Joner had a lower berth, and the porter made up the berth as soon as Joner came in with his satchel, and Joner pulled off his boots and gave them to the porter to black, and put his watch under the pillow and turned in. The boys in Sunday school all laffed, and the minister said I was a bigger fool than Pa was, and that was useless. If you go back on me, now, I won't have a friend, except my chum and a dog, and I swear, by my halidom, that I never put no sand in your sugar, or kerosene in your butter. I admit the picking off of the codfish, but you can charge it to Pa, the same as you did the eggs that I pushed my chum over into last summer, though I thought you did wrong in charging Christmas prices for dog days' eggs. When my chum's Ma scraped his pants she said there was not an egg represented on there that was less than two years old. The Sunday school folks have all gone back on me, since I put kyan pepper on the stove, when they were singing 'Little Drops of Water,' and they all had to go out doors and air themselves, but I didn't mean to let the pepper drop on the stove. I was just holding it over the stove to warm it, when my chum hit the funny bone of my elbow. Pa says I am a terror to cats. Every time Pa says anything, it gives me a new idea. I tell you Pa has got a great brain, but sometimes he don't have it with him. When he said I was a terror to cats I thought what fun there is in cats, and

me and my chum went to stealing cats right off, and before night we had eleven cats caged. We had one in a canary bird cage, three in Pa's old hat boxes, three in Ma's band box, four in valises, two in a trunk, and the rest in a closet up stairs."

"That night Pa said he wanted me to stay home because the committee that is going to get up a noyster supper in the church was going to meet at our house, and they might want to send me on errands. I asked him if my chum couldn't stay too, 'cause he is the healthiest infant to run after errands that ever was, and Pa said he could stay, but we must remember that there musn't be no monkey business going on. I told him there shouldn't be no monkey business, but I didn't promise nothing about cats. Well, sir, you'd a dide. The committee was in the library by the back stairs, and me and my chum got the cat boxes all together, at the top of the stairs, and we took them all out and put them in a clothes basket, and just as the minister was speaking, and telling what a great good was done by these oyster sociables, in bringing the young people together, and taking their minds from the wickedness of the world, and turning their thoughts into different channels, one of the old tom cats in the basket gave a 'purmeow' that sounded like the wail of a lost soul, or a challenge to battle, I told my chum that we couldn't hold the bread-board over the clothes basket much longer, when two or three cats began to yowl, and the minister stopped talking and Pa told Ma to open the stair door and tell the hired girl to see what

was the matter up there. She thought our cat had got shut up in the storm door, and she opened the stair door to yell to the girl, and then I pushed the clothes basket, cats and all down the back stairs. Well, sir, I suppose no committee for a noyster supper, was ever more astonished. I heard ma fall over a willow rocking chair, and say, 'scat,' and I heard Pa say, 'well, I'm dam'd,' and a girl that sings in the choir say, 'Heavens, I am stabbed,' then my chum and me ran to the front of the house and come down the front stairs looking as innocent as could be, and we went in the library, and I was just going to tell Pa if there was any errands he wanted run my chum and me was just aching to run them, when a yellow cat without any tail was walking over the minister, and Pa was throwing a hassock at two cats that were clawing each other under the piano, and Ma was trying to get her frizzes back on her head, and the choir girl was standing on the lounge with her dress pulled up, trying to scare cats with her striped stockings, and the minister was holding his hands up, and I guess he was asking a blessing on the cats, and my chum opened the front door and all the cats went out. Pa and Ma looked at me. and I said it wasn't me, and the minister wanted to know how so much cat hair got on my coat and vest, and I said a cat met me in the hall and kicked me, and Ma cried, and Pa said that boy beats hell, and the minister said I would be all right if I had been properly brought up, and then Ma was mad, and the committee broke up. Well, to tell the honest truth

Pa basted me, and yanked me around until I had to have my arm in a sling, but what's the use of making such a fuss about a few cats. Ma said she never wanted to have my company again, cause I spoiled everything. But I got even with Pa for basting me, this morning, and I dassent go home. You see Ma has got a great big bath sponge as big as a chair cushion, and this morning I took the sponge and filled it with warm water, and took the feather cushion out of the chair Pa sits in at the table, and put the sponge in its place, and covered it over with the cushion cover, and when we all got set down to the table Pa came in and sat down on it to ask a blessing. He started in by closing his eyes and placing his hands up in front of him like a letter V, and then he began to ask that the food we were about to partake off be blessed, and then he was going on to ask that all of us be made to see the error of our ways, when he began to hitch around, and he opened one eye and looked at me, and I looked as pious as a boy can look when he knows the pancakes are getting cold, and Pa he kind of sighed and said 'Amen' sort of snappish, and he got up and told Ma he didn't feel well, and she would have to take his place and pass around the sassidge and potatoes, and he looked kind of scart and went out with his hand on his pistol pocket, as though he would like to shoot, and Ma she got up and went around and sat in Pa's chair. The sponge didn't hold more than half a pail full of water, and I didn't want to play no joke on Ma, cause the cats nearly broke her up, but she sat down

and was just going to help me, when she rung the bell and called the hired girl, and said she felt as though her neuralgia was coming on, and she would go to her room, and told the girl to sit down and help Hennery. The girl sat down and poured me out some coffee, and then she said. 'Howly Saint Patrick, but I blave those pancakes are burning,' and she went out in the kitchen. I drank my coffee, and then took the big sponge out of the chair and put the cushion in the place of it, and then I put the sponge in the bath room, and I went up to Pa and Ma's room, and asked them if I should go after the doctor, and Pa had changed his clothes and got on his Sunday pants, and he said, 'never mind the doctor, I guess we will pull through,' and for me to get out and go to the devil, and I came over here, Say, there is no harm in a little warm water, is there? Well, I'd like to know what Pa and Ma and the hired girl thought. I am the only real healthy one there is in our family."

CHAPTER XXIII.

HE BECOMES A DRUGGIST.

"I HAVE GONE INTO BUSINESS!"—A NEW ROSE GERANIUM PERFUME—THE BAD BOY IN A DRUGGIST'S STORE—PRACTICING ON HIS PA—AN EXPLOSION—THE SEIDLETZ POWDER—HIS PA'S FREQUENT PAINS—POUNDING INDIA-RUBBER—CURING A WART.

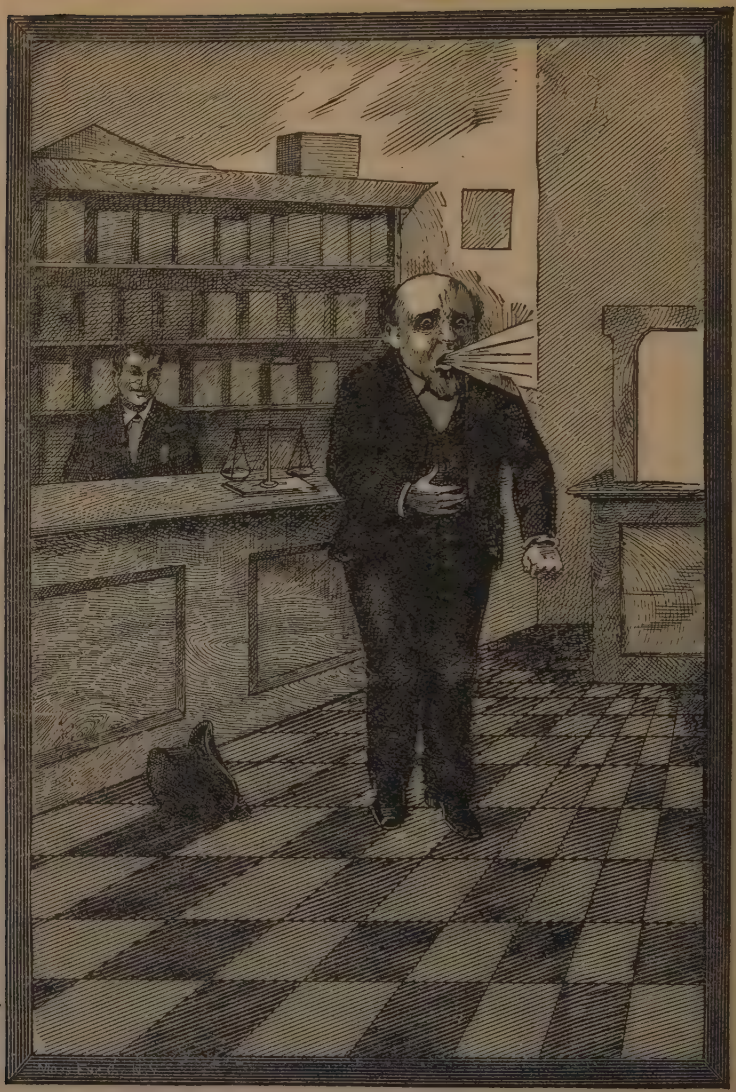
"WHEW! What is that smells so about this store? It seems as though everything had turned frowy," said the grocery man to his clerk, in the presence of the bad boy, who was standing with his back to the stove, his coat tails parted with his hands, and a cigarette in his mouth.

"May be it is me that smells frowy," said the boy as he put his thumbs in the armholes of his vest, and spit at the keyhole in the door. "I have gone into business."

"By thunder, I believe it is you," said the grocery man, as he went up to the boy, snuffed a couple of times, and then held his hand to his nose. "The board of health will kerosene you, if they ever smell that smell, and send you to the glue factory. What business you gone into to make you smell so rank?"

"Well, you see Pa began to think it was time I

learned a trade, or a perfession, and he saw a sign in a drug store window, 'boy wanted,' and as he had a boy he didn't want, he went to the druggist and got a job for me. This smell on me will go off in a few weeks. You know I wanted to try all the perfumery in the store, and after I had got about forty different extracts on my clothes, another boy that worked there he fixed up a bottle of benzine and assafety and brimstone, and a whole lot of other horrid stuff, and labeled it 'rose geranium,' and I guess I just wallered in it. It *is* awful, aint it? It kerflummixed Ma when I went into the dining-room the first night that I got home from the store, and broke Pa all up, He said I reminded him of the time that they had a litter of skunks under the barn. The air seemed fixed around where I am, and everybody seems to know who fixed it. A girl came in the store yesterday to buy a satchet, and there wasn't anybody there but me, and I didn't know what it was; and I took down everything in the store pretty near, before I found it, and then I wouldn't have found it only the proprietor came in. The girl asked the proprietor if there wasn't a good deal of sewer-gas in the store, and he told me to go out and shake myself. I think the girl was mad at me because I got a nursing bottle out of the show case, with a rubber muzzle, and asked her if that was what she wanted. Well, she told me a satchet was something for the stummick, and I thought a nursing bottle was the nearest thing to it."



NEW WAY OF TAKING SEIDLITZ POWDERS.

"I should think you would drive all the customers away from the store," said the grocery man, as he opened the door to let the fresh air in.

"I don't know but I will, but I am hired for a month on trial, and I shall stay. You see, I shan't practice on anybody but Pa for a spell. I made up my mind to that when I gave a woman some salts instead of powdered borax, and she came back mad. Pa seems to want to encourage me, and is willing to take anything that I ask him to, He had a sore throat and wanted something for it, and the boss drugger told me to put some tannin and chlorate of potash in a mortar, and grind it, and I let Pa pound it with the mortar, and while he was pounding I dropped in a couple of drops of sulphuric acid, and it exploded and blowed Pa's hat clear across the store, and Pa was whiter than a sheet. He said he guessed his throat was all right, and he wouldn't come near me again that day. The next day Pa came in and I was laying for him. I took a white seidletz powder and a blue one, and dissolved them in separate glasses, and when Pa came in I asked him if he didn't want some lemonade, and he said he did, and I gave him the sour one and he drank it. He said it was too sour, and then I gave him the other glass, that looked like water, to take the taste out of his mouth, and he drank it. Well, sir, when those two powders got together in Pa's stummick, and began to siz and steam, and foam, Pa pretty near choked to death, and the suds came out of his nostrils, and his eyes stuck out, and as soon as he could get his

breath he yelled 'fire,' and said he was poisoned, and called for a doctor, but I thought as long as we had a doctor right in the family there was no use of hiring one, so I got a stomach pump, and I would have had him baled out in no time, only the proprietor came in and told me to go and wash some bottles, and he gave Pa a drink of brandy, and Pa said he felt better. Pa has learned where we keep the liquor, and he comes in two or three times a day with a pain in his stomach. They play awful mean tricks on a boy in a drug store. The first day they put a chunk of something sort of blue into a mortar, and told me to pulverize it, and then made it up into two grain pills. Well, sir, I pounded that chunk all the forenoon, and it never pulverized at all, and the boss told me to hurry up, as the woman was waiting for the pills, and I mauled it till I was nearly dead, and when it was time to go to supper the boss came and looked in the mortar, and took out the chunk, and said, 'You dum fool, you have been pounding all day on a chunk of India rubber, instead of blue mass!' Well, how did I know? But I will get even with them if I stay there long enough, and don't you forget it. If you have a prescription you want filled you can come down to the store and I will put it up for you myself, and then yon will be sure you get what you pay for.

"Yes, said the grocery man, as he cut off a piece of limberg cheese and put on the stove, to purify the air in the room, "I should laugh to see myself taking any medicine you put up. You will kill some one

yet, by giving them poison instead of quinine. But what has your Pa got his nose tied up for? He looks as though he had had a fight."

"O, that was from my treatment. He had a wart on his nose. You know that wart. You remember how the minister told him if other peoples business had a button-hole in it, Pa could button the wart in the button-hole, as he always had his nose there. Well, I told Pa I could cure that wart with caustic, and he said he would give five dollars if I could cure it, so I took a stick of caustic and burned the wart off, but I guess I burned down into the nose a little, for it swelled up as big as a lobster. Pa says he would rather have a whole nest of warts than such a nose, but it will be all right in a year or two."

CHAPTER XXIV.

HE QUITS THE DRUG BUSINESS.

HE HAS DISSOLVED WITH THE DRUGGER—THE OLD LADY AND THE GIN—THE BAD BOY IGNOMINIOUSLY FIRED—HOW HE DOSED HIS PA'S BRANDY—THE BAD BOY AS "HAWTY AS A DOOK"—HE GETS EVEN WITH HIS GIRL—THE BAD BOY WANTS A QUIET PLACE—THE OLD MAN THREATENS THE PARSON.

"WHAT are you loafing around here for," says the grocery man to the bad boy one day this week. "It is after nine o'clock, and I should think you would want to be down to the drug store. How do you know but there may be somebody dying for a dose of pills?"

"O, darn the drug store. I have got sick of that business, and I have dissolved with the drugger. I have resigned. The policy of the store did not meet with my approval, and I have stepped out and am waiting for them to come and tender me a better position at an increased salary," said the boy, as he threw a cigar stub into a barrel of prunes and lit a fresh one.

"Resigned, eh?" said the grocery man as he fished out the cigar stub and charged the boy's father

with two pounds of prunes, didn't you and the boss agree?"

"Not exactly, I gave an old lady some gin when she asked for camphor and water, and she made a show of herself. I thought I would fool her, but she knew mighty well what it was, and she drank about half a pint of gin, and got to tipping over bottles and kegs of paint, and when the drug man came in with his wife, the old woman threw her arms around his neck and called him her darling, and when he pushed her away, and told her she was drunk, she picked up a bottle of citrate of magnesia and pointed it at him, and the cork came out like a pistol, and he thought he was shot, and his wife fainted away, and the police came and took the old gin refrigerator away, and then the drug man told me to face the door, and when I wasn't looking he kicked me four times, and I landed in the street, and he said if I ever came in sight of the store again he would kill me dead. That is the way I resigned. I tell you, they will send for me again. They never can run that store without me.

"I guess they will worry along without you," said the grocery man. "How does your Pa take your being fired out? I should think it would brake him all up."

"O, I think Pa rather likes it. At first he thought he had a soft snap with me in the drug store, cause he has got to drinking again, like a fish, and he has gone back on the church entirely; but after I had put a few things in his brandy he concluded it was

cheaper to buy it, and he is now patronizing a barrel house down by the river.

"One day I put some Castile soap in a drink of brandy, and Pa leaned over the back fence more than an hour, with his finger down his throat. The man that collects the ashes from the alley asked Pa if he had lost anything, and Pa said he was only 'sugaring off.' I don't know what that is. When Pa felt better he came in and wanted a little whiskey to take the taste out of his mouth, and I gave him some, with about a teaspoonful of pulverized alum in it. Well, sir, you'd a dide. Pa's mouth and throat was so puckered up that he couldn't talk. I don't think that drugman will make anything by firing me out, because I shall turn all the trade that I control to another store. Why, sir, sometimes there were eight and nine girls in the store all at wonct, on account of my being there. They came to have me put extracts on their handkerchiefs, and to eat gum drops—he will lose all that trade now. My girl that went back on me for the telegraph messenger boy, she came with the rest of the girls, but she found that I could be as 'hawty as a dook.' I got even with her, though. I pretended I wasn't mad, and when she wanted me to put some perfumery on her handkerchief I said all right, and I put on a little geranium and white rose, and then I got some tincture of assafety, and sprinkled it on her dress and cloak when she went out. That is about the worst smelling stuff that ever was, and I was glad when she went out and met the telgraph

boy on the corner. They went off together; but he came back pretty soon, about the homesickest boy you ever saw, and he told my chum he would never go with that girl again because she smelled like spoiled oysters or sewer gas. Her folks noticed it, and made her go and wash her feet and soak herself, and her brother told my chum it didn't do any good, she smelled just like a glue factory, and my chum—the darn fool—told her brother that it was me who perfumed her, and he hit me in the eye with a frozen fish, down by the fish store, and that's what made my eye black; but I know how to cure a black eye. I have not been in a drug store eight days, and not know how to cure a black eye; and I guess I learned that girl not to go back on a boy 'cause he smelled like a goat.

"Well, what was it about your leaving the wrong medicine at houses? The policeman in this ward told me you come pretty near killing several people by leaving the wrong medicine."

"The way of it was this. There was about a dozen different kinds of medicine to leave at different places, and I was in a hurry to go to the roller skating rink, so I got my chum to help me, and we just took the numbers of the houses, and when we rung the bell we would hand out the first package we come to, and I understand there was a good deal of complaint. One old maid who ordered powder for her face, her ticket drew some worm lozengers, and she kicked awfully, and a widow who was going to be married, she ordered a celluloid comb

and brush, and she got a nursing bottle with a rubber nozzle, and a toothing ring, and she made quite a fuss; but the woman who was weaning her baby and wanted the nursing bottle, she got the comb and brush and some blue pills, and she never made any fuss at all. It makes a good deal of difference, I nctice, whether a person gets a better thing than they ordered or not. But the drug business is too lively for me. I have got to have a quiet place, and I guess I will be a cash boy in a store. Pa says he thinks I was cut out for a bunko steerer, and I may look for that kind of a job. Pa he is a terror since he got to drinking again. He came home the other day, when the minister was calling on Ma, and just cause the minister was sitting on the sofa with Ma, and had his hand on her shoulder, where she said the pain was when the rheumatiz came on, Pa was mad and told the minister he would kick his liver clear around on the other side if he caught him there again, and Ma felt awful about it. After the minister had gone away, Ma told Pa he had got no feeling at all, and Pa said he had got enough feeling for one family, and he didn't want no sky-sharp to help him. He said he could cure all the rheumatiz there was around his house, and then he went down town and didn't get home till most breakfast time. Ma says she thinks I am responsible for Pa's falling into bad ways again, and now I am going to cure him. You watch me, and see if I don't have Pa in the church in less than a week, praying and singing, and going home with the choir singers, just as pious

as ever. I am going to get a boy that writes a woman's hand to write to Pa, and—but I must not give it away. But you just watch Pa, that's all. Well, I must go and saw some wood. It is coming down a good deal, from a drug clerk to sawing wood, but I will get on top yet, and don't you forget it."

CHAPTER XXV.

HIS PA KILLS HIM.

A GENIUS AT WHISTLING—A FUR-LINED CLOAK A SURE CURE FOR CONSUMPTION—ANOTHER LETTER SENT TO THE OLD MAN—HE RESOLVES ON IMMEDIATE PUNISHMENT—THE BLADDER-BUFFER THE EXPLOSION—A TRAGIC SCENE—HIS PA VOWS TO REFORM.

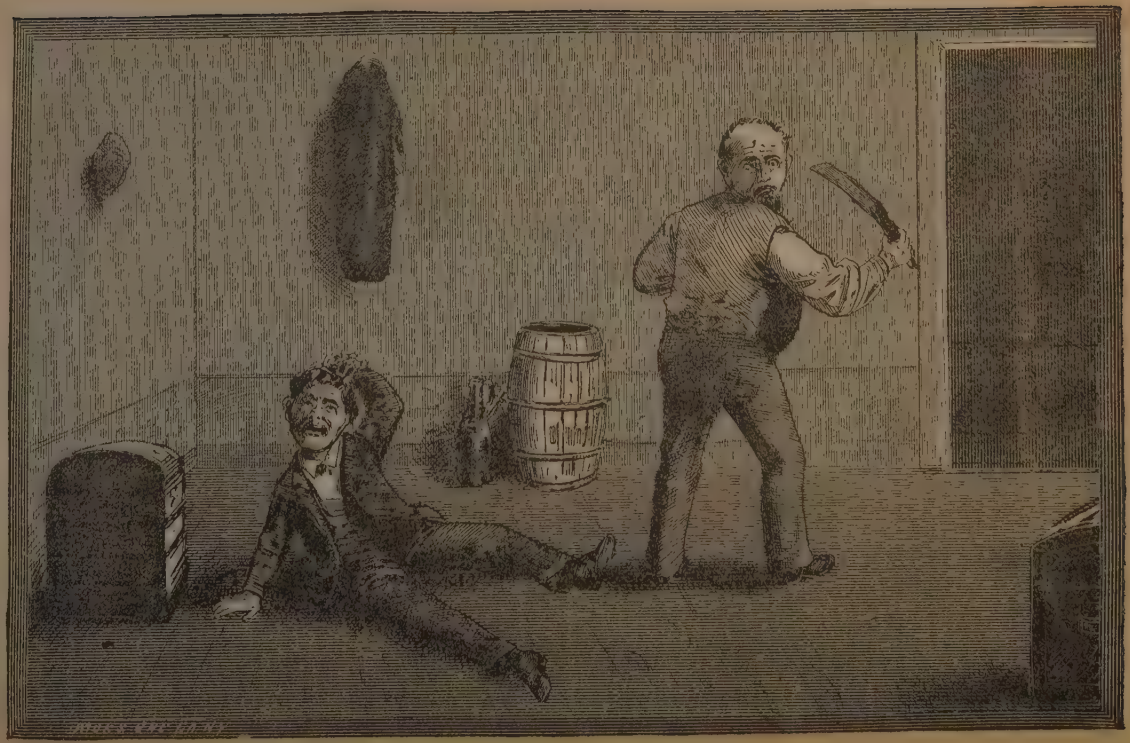
"For heaven's sake dry up that whistling," said the grocery man to the bad boy, as he sat on a bag of peanuts, whistling and filling his pockets. "There is no sense in such whistling. What do you whistle for, anyway?"

"I am practicing my profession," said the boy, as he got up and stretched himself, and cut off a slice of cheese, and took a few crackers. "I have always been a good whistler, and I have decided to turn my talent to account. I am going to hire an office and put out a sign, 'Boy furnished to whistle for lost dogs.' You see there are dogs lost every day, and any man would give half a dollar to a boy to find his dog. I can hire out to whistle for dogs, and can go around whistling and enjoying myself, and make money. Don't you think it is a good scheme?" asked the boy of the grocery man.

"Naw," said the grocery man, as he charged the cheese to the boy's father, and picked up his cigar stub, which he had left on the counter, and which the boy had rubbed on the kerosene barrel, "No, sir, that whistle would scare any dog that heard it. Say, what was your Pa running after the doctor in his shirt sleeves for last Sunday morning? He looked scared. Was your Ma sick again?"

"O, no, Ma is healthy enough, now she has got a new fur lined cloak. She played consumption on Pa, and coughed so she liked to raise her lights and liver, and made Pa believe she couldn't live, and got the doctor to prescribe a fur lined circular, and Pa went and got one, and Ma has improved awfully. Her cough is all gone, and she can walk ten miles. I was the one that was sick. You see, I wanted to get Pa into the church again, and get him to stop drinking, so I got a boy to write a letter to him, in a female hand, and sign the name of a choir singer Pa was mashed on, and tell him she was yearning for him to come back to the church, and that the church seemed a blank without his smiling face, and benevolent heart, and to please come back for her sake. Pa got the letters Saturday night and he seemed tickled, but I guess he dreamed about it all night, and Sunday morning he was mad, and he took me by the ear and said I couldn't come no 'Daisy' business on him the second time. He said he knew I wrote the letter, and for me to go up to the store room and prepare for the almightiest licking a boy ever had, and he went down stairs and broke up

an apple barrel and got a stave to whip me with. Well, I had to think mighty quick, but I was enough for him. I got a dried bladder in my room, one that me and my chum got to the slotter house, and I blowed it partly up, so it would be sort of flat-like, and I put it down inside the back part of my pants, right about where Pa hits when he punishes me. I knowed when the barrel stave hit the bladder it would explode. Well, Pa he came up and found me crying. I can cry just as easy as you can turn on the water at a faucet, and Pa took off his coat and looked sorry. I was afraid he would give up whipping me when he see me cry, and I wanted the bladder experiment to go on, so I looked kind of hard, as if I was defying him to do his worst, and then he took me by the neck and laid me across a trunk. I didn't dare struggle much for fear the bladder would loose itself, and Pa said, 'Now Hennery, I am going to break you of this damfoolishness, or I will break your back,' and he spit on his hands and brought the barrel stave down on my best pants. Well, you'd a dide if you had heard the explosion. It almost knocked me off the trunk. It sounded like firing a firecracker away down cellar in a barrel, and Pa looked scared. I rolled off the trunk, on the floor, and put some flour on my face, to make me look pale, and then I kind of kicked my legs like a fellow who is dying on the stage, after being stabbed with a piece of lath, and groaned, and said, 'Pa you have killed me, but I forgive you,' and then rolled around, and frothed at the mouth, cause I had a



"TOO LATE, PA, I DIE AT THE HAND OF AN ASSASSIN!"

piece of soap in my mouth to make foam. Well, Pa was all broke up. He said, 'Great God, what have I done? I have broke his spinal column. O, my poor boy, do not die?' I kept chewing the soap and foaming at the mouth, and I drew my legs up and kicked them out, and clutched my hair, and rolled my eyes, and then kicked Pa in the stummick as he bent over me, and knocked his breath out of him, and then my limbs began to get rigid, and I said, 'Too late, Pa, I die at the hand of an assassin. Go for a doctor.' Pa throwed his coat over me, and started down stairs on a run, 'I have murdered my brave boy,' and he told Ma to go up stairs and stay with me, cause I had fallen off a trunk and ruptured a blood vessel, and he went after a doctor. When he went out the front door, I sat up and lit a cigarette, and Ma came up and I told her all about how I fooled Pa, and if she would take on and cry, when Pa got back, I would get him to go to church again, and swear off drinking and she said she would.

So when Pa and the doc. came back, Ma was sitting on a velocipede I used to ride, which was in the store-room, and she had her apron over her face, and she just more than bellowed. Pa he was pale, and he told the doc. he was just a playing with me with a little piece of board, and he heard something crack, and he guessed my spine got broke falling off the trunk. The doctor wanted to feel where my spine was broke, but I opened my eyes and had a vacant kind of stare, like a woman who leads a dog by a string, and looked as though my mind was

wandering, and I told the doctor there was no use setting my spine, as it was broke in several places, and I wouldn't let him feel of the dried bladder. I told Pa I was going to die, and I wanted him to promise me two things on my dying bed. He cried and said he would, and I told him to promise me he would quit drinking, and attend church regular, and he said he would never drink another drop, and would go to church every Sunday. I made him get down on his knees beside me and swear it, and the doc. witnessed it, and Ma said she was so glad, and Ma called the doctor out in in the hall and told him the joke, and the doc. came in and told Pa he was afraid Pa's presence would excite the patient, and for him to put on his coat and go out and walk around the block, or go to church, and Ma and he would remove me to another room, and do all that was possible to make my last hours pleasant. Pa he cried, and said he would put on his plug hat and go to church, and he kissed me, and got flour on his nose, and I came near laughing right out, to see the white flour on his red nose, when I thought how the people in church would laugh at Pa. But he went out feeling mighty bad, and then I got up and pulled the bladder out of my pants, and Ma and the doc. laughed awful. When Pa got back from church and asked for me, Ma said that I had gone down town. She said the doctor found my spine was only uncoupled and he coupled it together, and I was all right. Pa said it was 'almighty strange, cause I

heard the spine break, when I struck him with the barrel stave.' Pa was nervous all the afternoon, and Ma thinks he suspects that we played it on him. Say, you don't think there is any harm in playing it on an old man a little for a good cause, do you?"

The grocery man said he supposed, in the interest of reform it was all right, but if it was his boy that played such tricks he would take an ax to him, and the boy went out, apparently encouraged, saying he hadn't seen the old man since the day before, and he was almost afraid to meet him.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HIS PA MORTIFIED.

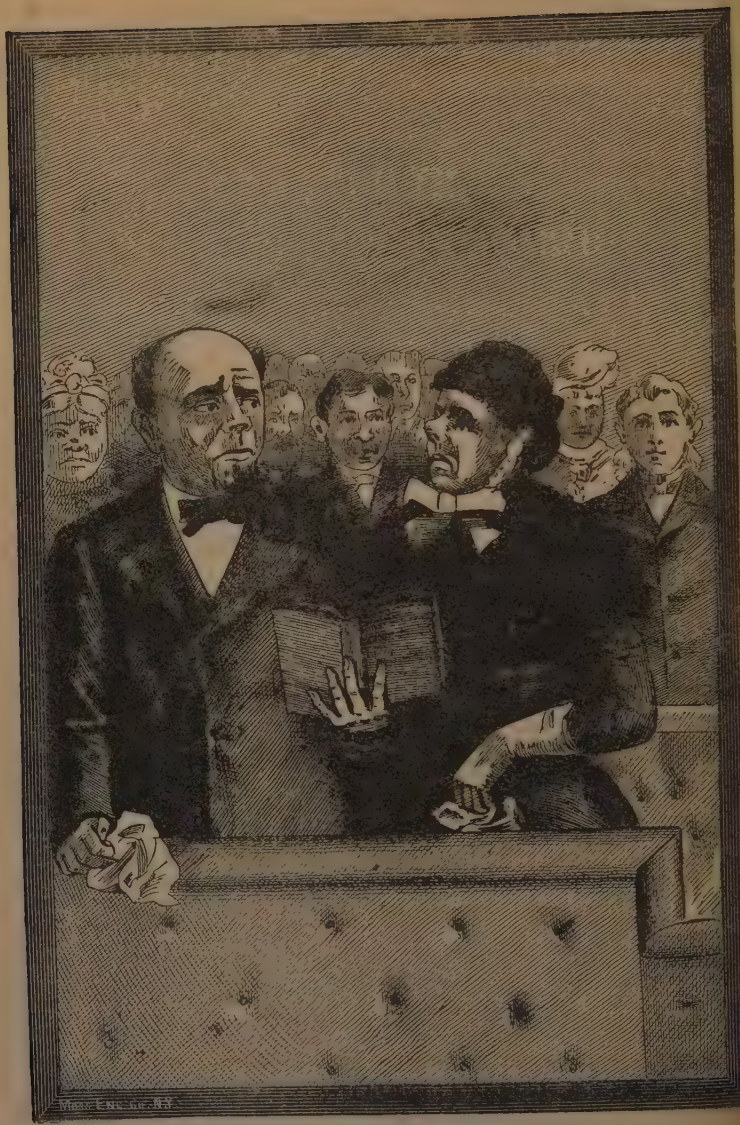
SEARCHING FOR SEWER GAS—THE POWERFUL ODOR OF LIMBERGER CHEESE AT CHURCH—THE AFTER MEETING—FUMIGATING THE HOUSE—THE BAD BOY RESOLVES TO BOARD AT AN HOTEL.

"WHAT was the health officer doing over to your house this morning?" said the grocery man to the bad boy, as the youth was firing frozen potatoes at the man who collects garbage in the alley.

"O, they are searching for sewer gas and such things, and they have got plumbers and other society experts till you can't rest, and I came away for fear they would find the sewer gas and warm my jacket. Say, do you think it is right, when anything smells awfully, to always lay it to a boy?"

"Well, in nine cases out of ten they would hit it right, but what do you think is the trouble over to your house, honest?"

"S-h-h! Now don't breathe a word of it to a living soul, or I am a dead boy. You see I was over to the dairy fair at the exposition building Saturday night, and when they were breaking up, me and my chum helped to carry boxes of cheese and



"JUST AS I AM,"

firkins of butter, and a cheese-man gave each of us a piece of limberger cheese, wrapped up in tin foil. Sunday morning I opened my piece, and it made me tired. O, it was the offulest smell I ever heard of, except the smell when they found a tramp who hung himself in the woods on the Whitefish Bay road, and had been dead three weeks. It was just like a old back number funeral. Pa and Ma were just getting ready to go to church, and I cut off a piece of cheese and put it in the inside pocket of Pa's vest, and I put another in the lining of Ma's muff, and they went to church. I went down to church, too, and sat on a back seat with my chum, looking just as pious as though I was taking up a collection. The church was pretty warm, and by the time they got up to sing the first hymn Pa's cheese began to smell a match against Ma's cheese. Pa held one side of the hymn book and Ma held the other, and Pa he always sings for all that is out, and when he braced himself and sang "Just as I am," Ma thought Pa's voice was tinctured a little with biliousness and she looked at him, and hunched him and told him to stop singing and breathe through his nose, cause his breath was enough to stop a clock. Pa stopped singing and turned around kind of cross towards Ma, and then he smelled Ma's cheese, and he turned his head the other way and said, 'whew,' and they didn't sing any more, but they looked at each other as though they smelled frowy. When they sat down they sat as far apart as they could get, and Pa sat next to a woman who used to be a

nurse in a hospital, and when she smelled Pa's cheese she looked at him as though she thought he had the small pox, and she held her handkerchief to her nose. The man in the other end of the pew, that Ma sat near, he was a stranger from Racine, who belongs to our church, and he looked at Ma sort of queer, and after the minister prayed, and they got up to sing again, the man took his hat and went out, and when he came by me he said something in a whisper about a female glue factory.

"Well, sir, before the sermon was over everybody in that part of the church had their handkerchiefs to their noses, and they looked at Pa and Ma scandalous, and the two ushers they come around in the pews looking for a dog, and when the minister got over his sermon, and wiped the perspiration off his face, he said he would like to have the trustees of the church stay after meeting, as there was some business of importance to transact. He said the question of proper ventilation and sewerage for the church would be brought up, and that he presumed the congregation had noticed this morning that the church was unusuaily full of sewer gas. He said he had spoken of the matter before, and expected it would be attended to before this. He said he was a meek and humble follower of the lamb, and was willing to cast his lot wherever the Master decided, but he would be blessed if he would preach any longer in a church that smelled like a bone boiling establishment. He said religion was a good thing, but no person could enjoy religion as well in a fat

rending establishment as he could in a flower garden, and as far as he was concerned he had got enough. Everybody looked at everybody else, and Pa looked at Ma as though he knew where the sewer gas came from, and Ma looked at Pa real mad, and me and my chum lit out, and I went home and distributed my cheese all around. I put a slice in Ma's bureau drawer, down under her underclothes, and a piece in the spare room, under the bed, and a piece in the bath-room, in the soap dish, and a slice in the album on the parlor table, and a piece in the library in a book, and I went to the dining room and put some under the table, and dropped a piece under the range in the kitchen. I tell you the house was loaded for bear. Ma came home from church first, and when I asked where Pa was, she said she hoped he had gone to walk around a block to air hisself. Pa came home to dinner, and when he got a smell of the house he opened all the doors, and Ma put a comfortable around her shoulders and told Pa he was a disgrace to civilization. She tried to get Pa to drink some carbolic acid. Pa finally convinced Ma it was not him, and then they decided it was the house that smelled so, as well as the church, and all Sunday afternoon they went visiting, and this morning Pa went down to the health office and got the inspector of nuisances to come up to the house, and when he smelled around a spell he said there was dead rats in the main sewer pipe, and they sent for plumbers, and Ma went out to a neighbors to borry some fresh air, and when the plumbers

began to dig up the floor in the basement I came over here. If they find any of that limberg cheese it will go hard with me. The hired girls have both quit, and Ma says she is going to break up keeping house and board. That is just into my hand. I want to board at a hotel, where you can have a bill-of-fare and tooth picks, and billiards, and everything. Well I guess I will go over to the house and stand in the back door and listen to the mocking bird. If you see me come flying out of the alley with my coat tail full of boots you can bet they have discovered the sewer gas."

CHAPTER XXVII.

HIS PA BROKE UP.

THE BAD BOY DON'T THINK THE GROCER FIT FOR HEAVEN—HE IS VERY SEVERE ON HIS OLD FRIEND—THE NEED OF A NEW REVISED EDITION—THE BAD BOY TURNS REVISER—HIS PA REACHES FOR THE POKER—A SPECIAL PROVIDENCE—THE SLED SLEWED!—HIS PA UNDER THE MULES.

"WELL, I guess I will go to hell. I will see you later," said the bad boy to the grocery man, as he held a cracker under the faucet of the syrup keg, and then sat down on a soap box by the stove and proceeded to make a lunch, while the grocery man charged the boy's father with a gallon of syrup and a pound of crackers.

"What do you mean, you profane wretch, talking about meeting me later in Hades," said the indignant grocery man. "I expect to pass by the hot place where you are sizzling, and go to the realms of bliss, where there is one continued round of haphiness, and angels playing on golden harps, and singing hymns of praise."

"Why, Pa says I will surely go to hell, and I thought you would probably be there, as it costs

something to get to heaven, and you can get to the other place for nothing. Say, you would be a healthy delegate to go to heaven, with a lot of girl angels, wouldn't you, smelling of frowy butter, as you always do, and kerosene, and herring, and bar soap, and cheese, and rotten potatoes. Say, an angel wouldn't stay on the same golden street with you, without holding her handkerchief to her nose, and you couldn't get in there, anyway, cause you would want to pay your entrance fee out of the store.

"Say, you get out of here, condemn you. You are getting sassy. There is no one that is more free hearted than I am," said the grocery man.

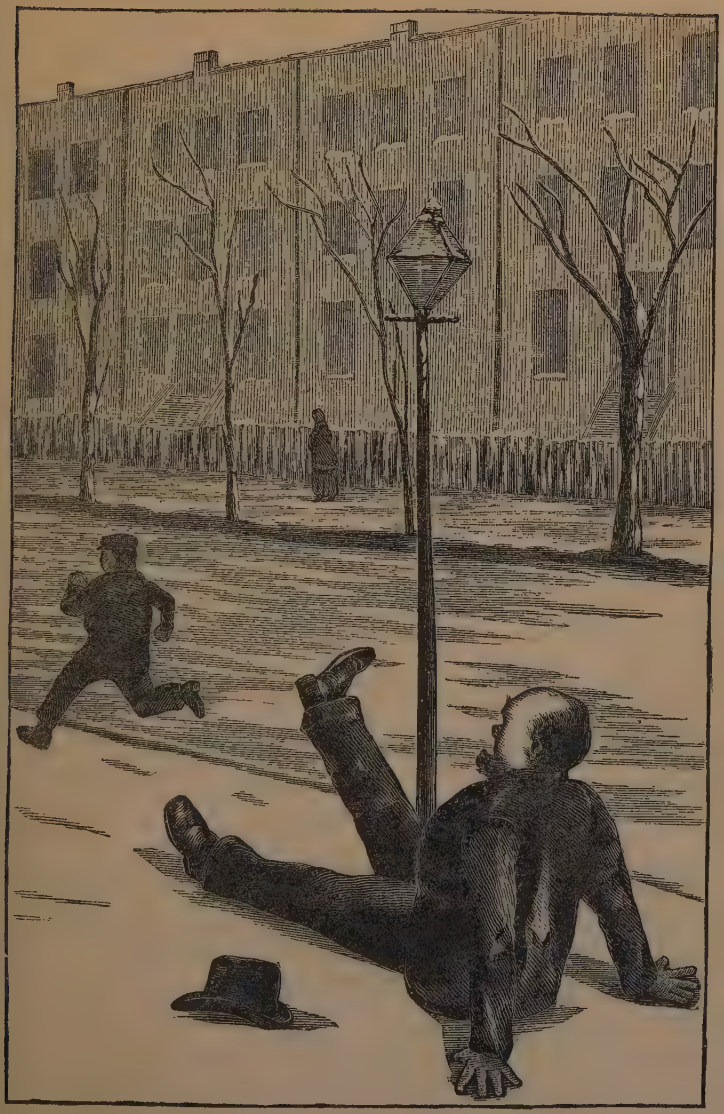
"O, give us a *siesta*. I am onto you bigger than an elevator. When they had the oyster sociable at the church, you gave four pounds of musty crackers with worms in, and they tasted of kerosene, and when the minister prayed for those who had generously contributed to the sociable, you raised up your head as though you wanted them all to know he meant you. If a man can get to heaven on four pounds of musty crackers, done up in a paper that has been around mackerel, then what's the use of a man being good, and giving sixteen ounces to the pound? But, there, don't blush, and cry. I will use my influence to get your feet onto the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, but you have got to quit sending those small potatoes to our house, with a few big ones on top of the basket. I'll tell you how it was that Pa told me I would go to hell. You see Pa has been reading out of an old back number

bible, and Ma and me argued with him about getting a new revised edition. We told him that the old one was all out of style, and that all the neighbors had the newest cut in bibles, with dolman sleeves, and gathered in the back, and they put on style over us, and we could not hold up our heads in society when it was known that we were wearing the old last year's bible. Pa kicked against it, but finally got one. I thought I had as much right to change things in the revised bible, as the other fellows had to change the old one, so I pasted some mottoes and patent medicine advertisements in it, after the verses. Pa never reads a whole chapter, but reads a verse or two and skips around. Before breakfast, the other morning, Pa got the new bible and started to read the ten commandments, and some other things. The first thing Pa struck was, 'Verily I say unto you, try St. Jacobs oil for rheumatism.' Pa looked over his specks at Ma, and then looked at me, but I had my face covered with my hands, sort of pious. Pa said he didn't think it was just the thing to put advertisements in the bible, but Ma said she didn't know as it was any worse than to have a patent medicine notice next to Beecher's sermon in the religious paper. Pa sighed and turned over a few leaves, and read, 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his ox, if you love me as I love you no knife can cut our love in two.' That last part was a motto that I got out of a paper of candy. Pa said that the sentiment was good, but he didn't think the revisers had improved the

old commandment very much. Then Pa turned over and read, 'Take a little wine for the stomach's sake, and keep a bottle of Reed's Gilt Edged tonic on your side-board, and you can defy malaria, and chills and fever.' Pa was hot. He looked at it again, and noticed that the tonic commandment was on yellow paper, and the corner curled up, and Pa took hold of it, and the paste that I stuck it on with was not good, and it come off, and when I saw Pa lay down the bible, and put his spectacles in the case, and reach for the fire poker, I knew he was not going to pray, and I looked out the window and yelled dog fight, and I lit out, and Pa followed me as far as the sidewalk, and it was that morning when it was so slippery, and Pa's feet slipped out from under him, and he stood on his neck, and slid around on his ear, and the special providence of sleet on the sidewalk saved me. Say, do you believe in special providence? What was the use of that sleet on the sidewalk, if it was not to save sinners?

"O, I don't know anything about special providences," said the grocery man, "but I know you have got two of your pockets filled with them boneless raisins since you have been talking, and my opinion is you will steal. But, say, what is your Pa on crutches for? I see him hobbling down town this morning. Has he spraind his ankle?"

"Well, I guess his ankle got sprained with all the rest. You see, my chum and me went bobbing, and Pa said he supposed he used to be the greatest bobber, when he was a boy, that ever was. He said he



SPECIAL PROVIDENCE FOR THE BAD BOY.

used to slide down a hill that was steeper than a church steeple. We asked him to go with us, and we went to that street that goes down by the depot, and we had two sleds hitched together, and there were mor'n a hundred boys, and Pa wanted to steer, and he got on the front sled, and when we got about half way down the sled slewed, and my chum and me got off all right, but Pa got shut up between the two sleds, and the other boys behind they all run over Pa and one sled runner caught him in the trowsers leg, and dragged him over the slippery ice clear to the bottom, and the whole lay out run into the street car, and the mules got wild and kicked, and Pa's suspenders broke, and when my chum and me got down there Pa was under the car, and a boy's boots was in Pa's shirt bosom, and another boy was straddle of Pa's neck, and the crowd rushed up from the depot, and got Pa out, and began to yell 'fire,' and 'police,' and he kicked at a boy that was trying to get his sled out of the small of Pa's back, and a policeman came along and pushed Pa and said, 'Go away from here, ye owld divil, and let the b'ys enjoy themselves,' and he was going to arrest Pa, when me and my chum told him we would take Pa home. Pa said the hill was not steep enough for him, or he wouldn't have fell off. He is offul stiff to-day, but he says he will go skating with us next week, and show us how to skate. Pa means well, but he don't realize that he is getting stiff and can't be as kitteny as he used to be. He is very kind to me, If I had some fathers I would have

been a broken backed, disfigured angel long ago. Don't you think so?"

The grocery man said he was sure of it, and the boy got out with his boneless raisins, and pocket full of lump sugar.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HIS PA GOES SKATING.

THE BAD BOY CARVES A TURKEY—HIS PA'S FAME AS A SKATER—THE OLD MAN ESSAYS TO SKATE ON ROLLERS—HIS WILD CAPERS—HE SPREADS HIMSELF—HOLIDAYS A CONDEMNED NUISANCE—THE BAY BOY'S CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

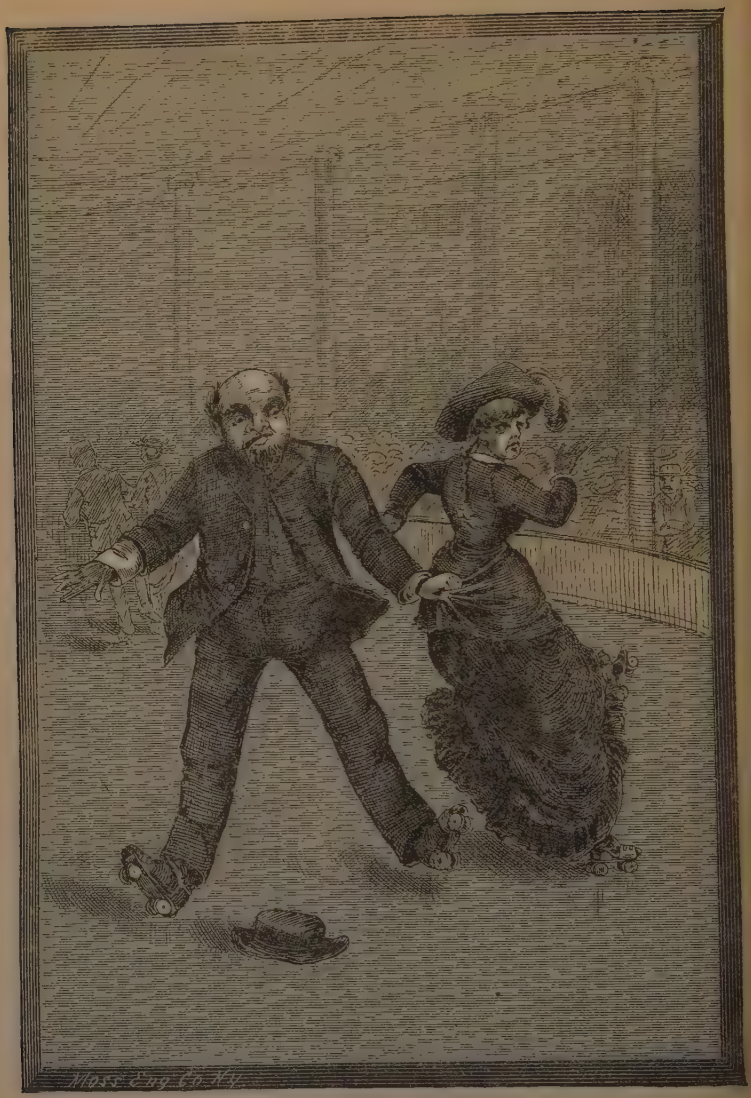
"WHAT is that stuff on your shirt bosom, that looks like soap grease?" said the grocery man to the bad boy, as he came into the grocery the morning after Christmas.

The boy looked at his shirt front, put his fingers on the stuff and smelled of his fingers, and then said, "O, that is nothing but a little of the turkey dressing and gravy. You see after Pa and I got back from the roller skating rink yesterday, Pa was all broke up and he couldn't carve the turkey, and I had to do it, and Pa sat in a stuffed chair with his head tied up, and a pillow amongst his legs, and he kept complaining that I didn't do it right. Gol darn a turkey any way. I should think they would make a turkey flat on the back, so he would lay on a greasy platter without skating all around the table. It looks easy to see Pa carve a turkey, but when I speared into the bosom of that turkey, and began to

saw on it, the turkey rolled around as though it was on castors, and it was all I could do to keep it out of Ma's lap. But I rasseled with it till I got off enough white meat for Pa and Ma and dark meat enough for me, and I dug out the dressing, but most of it flew into my shirt bosom, cause the string that tied up the place where the dressing was concealed about the person of the turkey, broke prematurely, and one oyster hit Pa in the eye, and he said I was as awkward as a cross-eyed girl trying to kiss a man with a hair lip. If I ever get to be the head of a family I shall carve turkeys with a corn sheller."

"But what broke your Pa up at the roller skating rink," asked the grocery man.

"O, everything broke him up. He is split up so Ma buttons the top of his pants to his collar button, like a bycycle rider. Well, he no business to have told me and my chum that he used to be the best skater in North America, when he was a boy. He said he skated once from Albany to New York in an hour and eighty minutes. Me and my chum thought if Pa was such a terror on skates we would get him to put on a pair of roller skates and enter him as the "great unknown," and clean out the whole gang. We told Pa that he must remember that roller skates were different from ice skates, and that maybe he couldn't skate on them, but he said it didn't make any difference what they were as long as they were skates, and he would just paralyze the whole crowd. So we got a pair of big roller skates for him, and while we were strapping them on, Pa he looked at



"PA GRABBED HER BY THE POLONAISE."

the skaters glide around on the smooth wax floor just as though they were greased. Pa looked at the skates on his feet, after they were fastened, sort of forlorn like, the way a horse thief does when they put shackles on his legs, and I told him if he was afraid he couldn't skate with them we would take them off, but he said he would beat anybody there was there, or bust a suspender. Then we straightened Pa up, and pointed him towards the middle of the room, and he said, "leggo," and we just give him a little push to start him, and he began to go. Well, by gosh, you'd a dide to have seen Pa try to stop. You see, you can't stick in your heel and stop, like you can on ice skates, and Pa soon found that out, and he began to turn sideways, and then he threw his arms and walked on his heels, and he lost his hat, and his eyes began to stick out, cause he was going right towards an iron post. One arm caught the post and he circled around it a few times, and then he let go and began to fall, and, sir, he kept falling all across the room, and everybody got out of the way, except a girl, and Pa grabbed her by the polonaise, like a drowning man grabs at straws, though there wasn't any straws in her polonaise as I know of, but Pa just pulled her along as though she was done up in a shawl-strap, and his feet went out from under him and he struck on his shoulders and kept a going, with the girl dragging along like a bundle of clothes. If Pa had had another pair of roller skates on his shoulders, and castors on his ears, he couldn't have slid along any

better. Pa is a short, big man, and as he was rolling along on his back, he looked like a sofa with castors on being pushed across a room by a girl. Finally Pa came to the wall and had to stop, and the girl fell right across him, with her roller skates in his neck, and she called him an old brute, and told him if he didn't let go of her polonaise she would murder him. Just then my chum and me got there and we amputated Pa from the girl, and lifted him up, and told him for heaven's sake to let us take off the skates, cause he couldn't skate any more than a cow, and Pa was mad and said for us to let him alone, and he could skate all right, and we let go and he struck out again. Well, sir, I was ashamed. An old man like Pa ought to know better than to try to be a boy. This last time Pa said he was going to spread himself, and if I am any judge of a big spread, he did spread himself. Somehow the skates had got turned around side-ways on his feet, and his feet got to going in different directions, and Pa's feet were getting so far apart that I was afraid I would have two Pa's, half the size, with one leg apiece.

"I tried to get him to take up a collection of his legs, and get them both in the same ward but his arms flew around and one hit me on the nose, and I thought if he wanted to strike the best friend he had, he could run his old legs hisself. When he began to seperate I could hear the bones crack, but maybe it was his pants, but anyway he came down on the floor like one of these fellows in a circus who spreads hisself,

and he kept going and finally he surrounded an iron post with his legs, and stopped, and looked pale, and the proprietor of the rink told Pa if he wanted to give a flying trapeze performance he would have to go to the gymnasium, and he couldn't skate on his shoulders any more, cause other skaters were afraid of him. Then Pa said he would kick the liver out of the proprietor of the rink, and he got up and steaded himself, and then he tried to kick the man, but both heels went up to wonct, and Pa turned a back summersault and struck right on his vest in front. I guess it knocked the breath out of him, for he didn't speak for a few minutes, and then he wanted to go home, and we put him in a street car, and he laid down on the hay and rode home. O, the work we had to get Pa's clothes off. He had cricks in his back, and everywhere, and Ma was away to one of the neighbors, to look at the presents, and I had to put liniment on Pa, and I made a mistake and got a bottle of furniture polish, and put it on Pa and rubbed it in, and when Ma came home, Pa smelled like a coffin at a charity funeral, and Ma said there was no way of getting that varnish off of Pa till it wore off. Pa says holidays are a condemned nuisance anyway. He will have to stay in the house all this week.

"You are pretty rough on the old man," said the grocery man, "after he has been so kind to you and given you nice presents."

"Nice presents nothin. All I got was a 'come to Jesus' Christmas card, with brindle fringe, from

Ma, and Pa gave me a pair of his old suspenders, and a calender with mottoes for every month, some quotations from scripture, such as 'honor thy father and mother,' and 'evil communications corrupt two in the bush,' and 'a bird in the hand beats two pair.' Such things don't help a boy to be good. What a boy wants is club skates, and seven shot revolvers, and such things. Well, I must go and help Pa roll over in bed, and put on a new porous plaster. Good bye."

CHAPTER XXIX.

HIS PA GOES CALLING.

HIS PA STARTS FORTH—A PICTURE OF THE OLD MAN "FULL"—POLITENESS AT A WINTER PICNIC—ASSAULTED BY SANDBAGGERS—RESOLVED TO DRINK NO MORE COFFEE—A GIRL FULL OF "AIG NOGG."

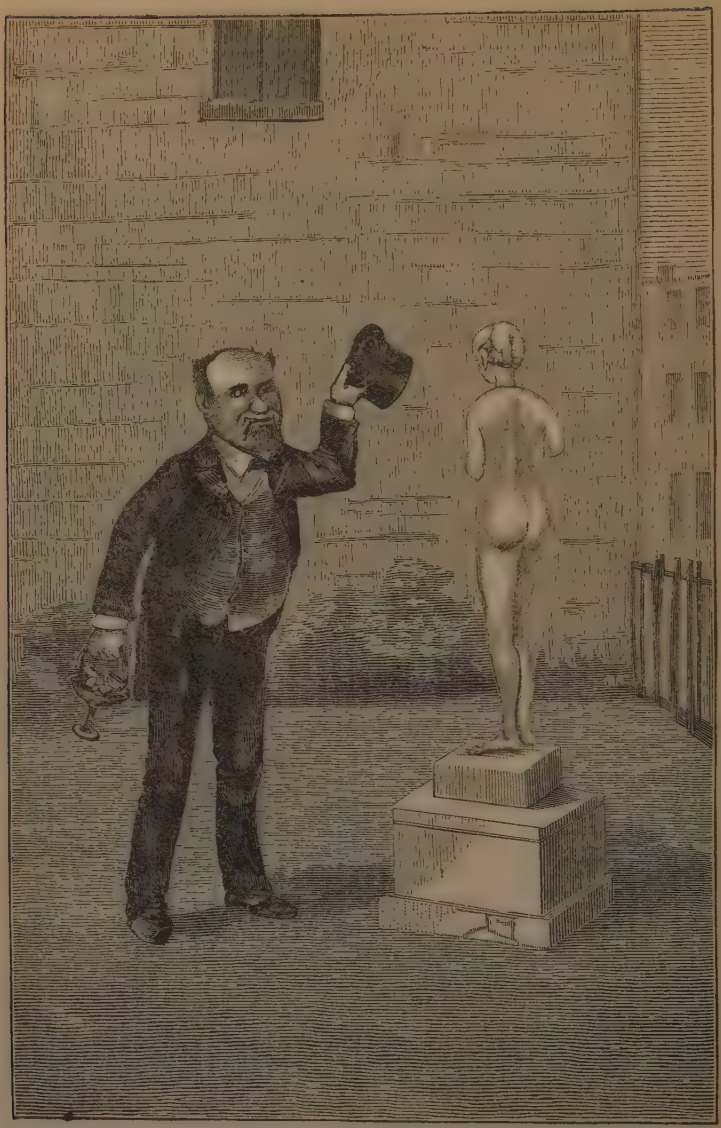
"SAY, you are getting too alfired smart," said the grocery man to the bad boy as he pushed him into a corner by the molasses barrel, and took him by the neck and choked him so his eyes stuck out. "You have driven away several of my best customers, and now, confound you, I am going to have your life," and he took up a cheese knife and began to sharpen it on his boot.

"What's the—gurgle—matter," asked the choking boy, as the grocery man's fingers let up on his throat a little, so he could speak. "I haint done nothin."

"Didn't you hang up that dead gray tom cat by the heels, in front of my store, with the rabbits I had for sale? I didn't notice it until the minister called me out in front of the store, and pointing to the rabbits, asked what good fat cats were selling for. By crimus, this thing has got to stop. You have got to move out of this ward or I will."

The boy got his breath and said it wasn't him that put the cat up there. He said it was the policeman, and he and his chum saw him do it, and he just come in to tell the grocery man about it, and before he could speak he had his neck nearly pulled off. The boy began to cry, and the grocery man said he was only joking, and gave him a box of sardines, and they made up. Then he asked the boy how his Pa put in his New Years, and the boy sighed and said :

"We had a sad time at our house New Years. Pa insisted on making calls, and Ma and me tried to prevent it, but he said he was of age, and guessed he could make calls if he wanted to, so he looked at the morning paper and got the names of all the places where they were going to receive, and he turned his paper collar, and changed ends with his cuffs, and put some arnica on his handkerchief, and started out. Ma told him not to drink anything, and he said he wouldn't, but he did. He was full the third place he went to. O, *so* full. Some men can get full and not show it, but when Pa gets full, he gets so full his back teeth float, and the liquor crowds his eyes out, and his mouth gets loose and wiggles all over his face, and he laughs all the time, and the perspiration just oozes out of him, and his face gets red, and he walks *so* wide. O, he disgraced us all. At one place he wished the hired girl a happy new year more than twenty times, and hung his hat on her elbow, and tried to put on a rubber hall mat for his over shoes. At another place he walked up a lady's



HAPPY NEW YEAR, MUM!

train, and carried away a card basket full of bananas and oranges. Ma wanted my chum and me to follow Pa and bring him home, and about dark we found him in the door yard of a house where they have statues in front of the house, and he grabbed me by the arm, and mistook me for another caller, and insisted on introducing me to a marble statue without any clothes on. He said it was a friend of his, and it was a winter picnic. He hung his hat on an evergreen, and put his overcoat on the iron fence, and I was so mortified I almost cried. My chum said if his Pa made such a circus of himself he would sand bag him. That gave me an idea, and when we got Pa most home I went and got a paper box covered with red paper, so it looked just like a brick, and a bottle of tomato ketchup, and when we got Pa up on the steps at home I hit him with the paper brick, and my chum squirted the ketchup on his head, and we demanded his money, and then he yelled murder, and we lit out, and Ma and the minister, who was making a call on her, all the afternoon, they came to the door and pulled Pa in. He said he had been attacked by a band of robbers, and they knocked his brains out, but he whipped them, and then Ma saw the ketchup brains oozing out of his head, and she screamed, and the minister said, 'Good heavens, he is murdered,' and just then I came in the back door and they sent me after the doctor, and they put Pa on the louuge, and tied up his head with a towel to keep the brains in, and Pa began to snore, and when the doctor came in it took

them half an hour to wake him, and then he was awful sick to his stummick, and then Ma asked the doctor if he would live, and the doc. analyzed the ketchup and smelled of it and told Ma he would be all right if he had a little Worcester sauce to put on with the ketchup, and when he said Pa would pull through, Ma looked awful sad. Then Pa opened his eyes and saw the minister and said that was one of the robbers that jumped on him, and he wanted to whip the minister, but the doc. held Pa's arms and Ma sat on his legs, and the minister said he had got some other calls to make, and he wished Ma a happy new year in the hall, much as fifteen minutes. His happy new year to Ma is most as long as his prayers. Well, we got Pa to bed, and when we undressed him we found nine napkins in the bosom of his vest, that he had picked up at the places where he called. He is all right this morning, but he says it is the last time he will drink coffee when he makes New Year's calls."

"Well, then you didn't have much fun yourself on New Years. That's too bad," said the grocery man,. as he looked at the sad eyed youth. "But you look hard. If you were old enough I should say you had been drunk, your eyes are so red."

"Didn't have any fun eh? Well, I wish I had as many dollars as I had fun. You see, after Pa got to sleep Ma wanted me and my chum to go to the houses that Pa had called at and return the napkins he had kleptomaniaced, so we dressed up and went. The first house we called at the girls were sort of

demoralized. I don't know as I ever saw a girl drunk, but those girls acted queer. The callers had stopped coming, and the girls were drinking something out of shaving cups that looked like lather, and they said it was 'aignogg.' They laffed and kicked up their heels wuss nor a circus, and their collars got unpinned, and their faces was red, and they put their arms around me and my chum and hugged us and asked us if we didn't want some of the custard. You'd a dide to see me and my chum drink that lather. It looked just like soap suds with nutmaig in it, but by gosh it got in its work sudden. At first I was afraid when the girls hugged me, but after I had drank a couple of shaving cups full of the 'aignogg' I wasn't afraid no more, and I hugged a girl so hard she catched her breath and panted and said, 'O, don't.' Then I kissed her, and she is a great big girl, bigger'n me, but she didn't care. Say, did you ever kiss a girl full of aignogg? If you did it would break up your grocery business. You would want to waller in bliss instead of selling mackerel. My chum ain't no slouch either. He was sitting in a stuffed chair holding another New Year's girl, and I could hear him kiss her so it sounded like a cutter scraping on bare ground. But the girl's Pa came in and said he guessed it was time to close the place, unless they had a license for an all night house, and me and my chum went out. But *wasn't* we sick when we got out doors. O, it seemed as though the pegs in my boots was the only thing that kept them down, and my chum he like to dide. He had

been to dinner and supper and I had only been skating all day, so he had more to contend with than I did. O, my, but that lets me out on aignogg. I don't know how I got home, but I got in bed with Pa, cause Ma was called away to attend a baby matinee in the night. I don't know how it is, but there never is anybody in our part of the town that has a baby but they have it in the night, and they send for Ma. I don't know what she has to be sent for every time for. Ma ain't to blame for all the young ones in this town, but she has got up a reputashun, and when we hear the bell ring in the night Ma gets up and begins to put on her clothes, and the next morning she comes in the dining room with a shawl over her head, and says, 'its a girl and weighs ten pounds,' or a boy, if its a boy baby. Ma was out on one of her professional engagements, and I got in bed with Pa. I had heard Pa blame Ma about her cold feet, so I got a piece of ice about as big as a raisin box, just zactly like one of Ma's feet, and I laid it right against the small of Pa's back. I couldn't help laffing, but pretty soon Pa began to squirm and he said, 'Why'n 'ell don't you warm them feet before you come to bed,' and then he hauled back his leg and kicked me clear out in the middle of the floor, and said if he married again he would marry a woman who had lost both of her feet in a railroad accident. Then I put the ice back in the bed with Pa and went to my room, and in the morning Pa said he sweat more'n a pail full in the night. Well, you must excuse me I have an engagement to shovel snow off the side-

walk. But before I go, let me advise you not to drink aignogg, and don't sell tom cats for rabbits," and he got out the door just in time to miss the rutabaga that the grocery man threw at him.

CHAPTER XXX.

HIS PA DISSECTED.

THE MISERIES OF THE MUMPS—NO PICKLES THANK YOU —ONE MORE EFFORT TO REFORM THE OLD MAN— THE BAD BOY PLAYS MEDICAL STUDENT—PROCEEDS TO DISSECT HIS PA— "GENTLEMEN I AM NOT DEAD!"—SAVED FROM THE SCALPEL!—"NO MORE WHISKY FOR YOU."

"I UNDERSTAND your Pa has got to drinking again like a fish," says the grocery man to the bad boy, as the youth came in the grocery and took a handful of dried apples. The boy ate a dried apple and then made up a terrible face, and the grocery man asked him what he was trying to do with his face. The boy caught his breath and then said:

"Say, don't you know any better than to keep dried apples where a boy can get hold of them when he has got the mumps? You will kill some boy yet by such dum carelessness. I thought these were sweet dried apples, but they are sour as a boarding house keeper, and they make me tired. Didn't you ever have the mumps? Gosh, but don't it hurt though? You have got to be darn careful when you have the mumps, and not go out bob-sledding, or

skating, or you will have your neck swell up biggern a milk pail. Pa says he had the mumps once when he was a boy and it broke him all up.

"Well, never mind the mumps, how about your Pa spreeing it. Try one of those pickles in the jar there, wont you. I always like to have a boy enjoy himself when he comes to see me," said the grocery man, winking to a man who was filling and old fashioned tin box with tobacco out of the pail, who winked back as much as to say, "if that boy eats a pickle on top of them mumps we will have a circus, sure."

"You can't play no pickle on me, not when I have the mumps. Ma passed the pickles to me this morning, and I took one mouthful, and like to had the lockjaw. But Ma didn't do it on purpose, I guess. She never had the mumps and didn't know how discouraging a pickle is. Darn if I didn't feel as though I had been struck in the butt of the ear with a brick. But about Pa. He has been fuller'n a goose ever since New Year's day. I think its wrong for women to tempt feeble minded persons with liquor on New Year's. Now me and my chum, we can take a drink and then let it alone. We have got brain, and know when we have got enough, but Pa, when he gets to going don't ever stop until he gets so sick that he can't keep his stummick inside of hisself. It is getting so they look to me to brace Pa up every time he gets on a tear, and I guess I fixed him this time so he will never touch liquor again. I scared him so his bald head turned gray in a singe night.

"What under the heavens have you done to him now?" says the grocery man, in astonishment. "I hope you haven't done anything you will regret in after years."

"Regret nothing," said the boy, as he turned the lid of the cheese box back and took the knife and sliced off a piece of cheese, and took a few crackers out of a barrel, and sat down on a soap box by the stove, "You see Ma was annoyed to death with Pa. He would come home full, when she had company, and lay down on the sofa and snore, and he would smell like a distillery. It hurt me to see Ma cry, and I told her I would break Pa of drinking if she would let me, and she said if I would promise not to hurt Pa to go ahead, and I promised not to. Then I got my chum and another boy, quite a big boy, to help, and Pa is all right. We went down to the place where they sell arms and legs, to folks who have served in the army, or a saw mill, or a thrashing machine, and lost their limbs, and we borrowed some arms and legs, and fixed up a dissecting room. We fixed a long table in the basement, big enough to lay Pa out on you know, and then we got false whiskers and moustaches, and when Pa came in the house drunk and laid down on the sofa, and got to sleep we took him and laid him out on the table, and took some trunk straps, and a sircingle and strapped him down to the table. He slept right along all through it, and we had another table with the false arms and legs on, and we rolled up our sleeves, and smoked pipes, just like I read that medical students do when

they cut up a man. Well, you'd a dide to see Pa look at us when he woke up. I saw him open his eyes, and then we began to talk about cutting up dead men. We put hickory nuts in our mouths so our voices would sound different, so he wouldn't know us, and I was telling the other boys about what a time we had cutting up the last man we bought. I said he was awful tough, and when we had got his legs off and had taken out his brain, his friends come to the dissecting room and claimed the body, and we had to give it up, but I saved the legs. I looked at Pa on the table and he began to turn pale, and he squirmed around to get up, but found he was fast. I had pulled his shirt up under his arms, while he was asleep, and as he began to move I took an icicle, and in the dim light of the candles, that were sitting on the table in beer bottles, I drew the icicle across Pa's stummick and I said to my chum, 'Doc, I guess we had better cut open this old duffer and see if he died from inflamation of the stummick, from hard drinking, as the coroner said he did.' Pa shuddered all over when he felt the icicle going over his bare stummick, and he said, 'For God's sake, gentlemen, what does this mean? I am not dead.'

The other boys looked at Pa with astonishment, and I said 'Well, we bought you for dead, and the coroner's jury said you were dead, and by the eternal we ain't going to be fooled out of a corpse when we buy one, are we Doc?' My chum said not if he knowed his self, and the other students said, 'Of

course he is dead. He thinks he is alive, but he died day before yesterday, fell dead on the street, and his folks said he had been a nuisance and they wouldn't claim the corpse, and we bought it at the morgue.' Then I drew the icicle across him again, and I said, 'I don't know about this, doctor. I find that blood follows the scalpel as I cut through the cuticle. Hand me the blood sponge please.' Pa began to wiggle around, and we looked at him, and my chum raised his eye-lid, and looked solemn, and Pa said, 'Hold on, gentlemen. Don't cut into me any more, and I can explain this matter. This is all a mistake. I was only drunk.' We went in a corner and whispered, and Pa kept talking all the time. He said if we would postpone the hog killing he could send and get witnesses to prove that he was not dead, but that he was a respectable citizen, and had a family. After we held a consultation I went to Pa and told him that what he said about being alive might possibly be true, though we had our doubts. We had found such cases before in our practice east, where men seemed to be alive, but it was only temporary. Before we had got them cut up they were dead enough for all practical purposes. Then I laid the icicle across Pa's abdomen, and went on to tell him that even if he *was* alive it would be better for him to play that he was dead, because he was such a nuisance to his family that they did not want him, and I was telling him that I had heard that in his lifetime he was very cruel to his boy, a bright little fellow who was

at the head of his class in Sunday school and a pet wherever he was known, when Pa interrupted me and said, 'Doctor, please take that carving knife off my stomach, for it makes me nervous. As for that boy of mine, he is the condemndest little whelp in town, and he isn't no pet anywhere. Now, you let up on this dissectin' business, and I will make it all right with you.' We held another consultation and then I told Pa that we did not feel that it was doing justice to society to give up the body of a notorious drnnkard, after we had paid twenty dollars for the corpse. If there was any hopes that he would reform and try and lead a different life, it would be different, and I said to the boys, 'gentlemen, we must do our duty. Doc, you dismember that leg, and I will attend to the stomach and the upper part of the body. He will be dead before we are done with him. We must remember that society has some claims on us, and not let our better natures be worked upon by the *post mortem* promises of a dead drunkard.' Then I took my icicle and began fumbling around the abdomen portion of Pa's remains, and my chum took a rough piece of ice and began to saw his leg off, while the other boy took hold of the leg and said he would catch it when it dropped off. Well, Pa kicked like a steer. He said he wanted to make one more appeal to us, and we acted sort of impatent but we let up to hear what he had to say. He said if we would turn him loose he would give us ten dollars more than we paid for his body, and that he would never drink another

drop as long as he lived. Then we whispered some more and then told him we thought favorably of his last proposition, but he must swear, with his hand on the leg of a corpse we were then dissecting that he would never drink again, and then he must be blindfolded and be conducted several blocks away from the dissecting room, before we could turn him loose. He said that was all right, and so we blindfolded him, and made him take a bloody oath, with his hand on a piece of ice that we told him was a piece of another corpse, and then we took him out of the house and walked him around the block four times, and left him on a corner, after he had promised to send the money to an address that I gave him. We told him to stand still five minutes after we left him, then remove the blindfold, and go home. We watched him, from behind a board fence, and he took off the handkerchief, looked at the name on a street lamp, and found he was not far from home. He started off saying 'That's a pretty narrow escape old man. No more whiskey for you.' I did not see him again until this morning, and when I asked him where he was last night he shuddered and said 'none of your darn business. But I never drink any more, you remember that.' Ma was tickled and she told me I was worth my weight in gold. Well, good day. That cheese is musty." And the boy went and caught on a passing sleigh.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HIS PA JOINS A TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

THE GROCERY MAN SYMPATHISES WITH THE OLD MAN —WARNS THE BAD BOY THAT HE MAY HAVE A STEP-FATHER!—THE BAD BOY SCORNS THE IDEA—INTRODUCES HIS PA TO THE GRAND "WORTHY DUKE!"—THE SOLEMN OATH—THE BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING.

"DON'T you think my Pa is showing his age a good deal more than usual?" asked the bad boy of the grocery man, as he took a smoked herring out of a box and peeled off the skin with a broken bladed jack-knife, and split it open and ripped off the bone, threw the head at a cat, and took some crackers and began to eat.

"Well, I don't know but he does look as though he was getting old," said the grocery man, as he took a piece of yellow wrapping paper, and charged the boy's poor old father with a dozen herrings and a pound of crackers; "But there is no wonder he is getting old. I wouldn't go through what your father has, the last year, for a million dollars. I tell you, boy, when your father is dead, and you get a step-father, and he makes you walk the chalk mark,

you will realize what a bonanza you have fooled yourself out of by killing off your father. The way I figure it, your father will last about six months, and you ought to treat him right, the little time he has to live."

"Well, I am going to," said the boy, as he picked the herring bones out of his teeth with a piece of a match that he sharpened with his knife. "But I don't believe in borrowing trouble about a step-father so long before hand. I don't think Ma could get a man to step into Pa's shoes, as long as I lived, not if she was inlaid with diamonds, and owned a brewery. There are brave men, I know, that are on the marry, but none of them would want to be brevet father to a cherubin like me, except he got pretty good wages. And then, since Pa was dissected he is going to lead a different life, and I guess I will make a man of him, if he holds out. We got him to join the Good Templars last night."

"No, you don't tell me," said the grocery man, as he thought that his trade in cider for mince pies would be cut off. "So you got him into the Good Templars, eh?"

"Well, he thinks he has joined the Good Templars, so it is all the same. You see my chum and me have been going to a private gymnasium, on the west side kept by a Dutchman, and in a back room he has all the tools for getting up muscle. There, look at my arm," said the boy, as he rolled up his sleeve and showed a muscle about as big is an oyster. "That is the result of training at the gymna-

sium. Before I took lessons I hadn't any more muscle than you have got. Well, the dutchman was going to a dance on the south side the other night, and he asked my chum to tend the gymnasium, and I told Pa if be would join the Good Templars that night there wouldn't be many at the lodge, and he wouldn't be so embarrassed, and as I was one of the officers of the lodge I would put it to him light, and he said he would go, so my chum got five other boys to help us put him through. So we steered him down to the gymnasium, and made him rap on the storm door outside, and I said who comes there, and he said it was a pilgrim who wanted to jine our sublime order. I asked him if he had made up his mind to turn from the ways of a hyena, and adopt the customs of the truly good, and he said if he knew his own heart he had, and then I told him to come in out of the snow and take off his pants. He kicked a little at taking off his pants, because it was cold out there in the storm door dog house, but I told him they all had to do it. The princes, potentates and paupers all had to come to it. He asked me how it was when we initiated women, and I told him women never took that degree. He pulled of his pants, and wanted a check for them, but I told him the Grand Mogul would hold his clothes, and then I blind-folded him, and with a base ball club I pounded on the floor as I walked around the gymnasium, while the lodge, headed by my chum, sung, 'We won't go home till morning.' I stopped in front of the ice-water tank and said 'Grand Worthy Duke, I bring

before you a pilgrim who has drank of the dregs until his stomach won't hold water, and who desires to swear off.' The Grand Mogul asked me if he was worthy and well qualified, and I told him that he had been drunk more or less since the reunion last summer, which ought to qualify him. Then the Grand Mogul made Pa repeat the most blood-curdling oath, in which Pa agreed, if he ever drank another drop, to allow anybody to pull his toe-nails out with tweezers, to have his liver dug out and fed to dogs, his head chopped off, and his eyes removed. Then the Mogul said he would brand the candidate on the bare back with the initial letters of our order, 'G. T.,' that all might read how a brand had been snatched from the burning. You'd a dide to see Pa flinch when I pulled up his shirt, and got ready to brand him.

"My chum got a piece of ice out of the water cooler, and just as he clapped it on Pa's back I burned a piece of horses hoof in the candle and held it to Pa's nose, and I guess Pa actually thought it was his burning skin that he smelled. He jumped about six feet and said, 'Great heavens, what you dewin',' and then he began to roll over a barrel which I had arranged for him. Pa thought he was going down cellar, and he hung to the barrel, but he was on top half the time. When Pa and the barrel got through fighting I was beside him, and I said, 'Calm yourself, and be prepared for the ordeal that is to follow.' Pa asked how much of this dum fooling there was, and said he was sorry he joined. He said he could

let licker alone without having the skin all burned off his back. I told Pa to be brave and not weaken, and all would be well. He wiped the perspiration off his face on the end of his shirt, and we put a belt around his body and hitched it to a tackle, and pulled him up so his feet were just off the floor, and then we talked as though we were away off, and I told my chum to look out that Pa did not hit the gas fixtures, and Pa actually thought he was being hauled clear up to the roof. I could see he was scared by the complexion of his hands and feet, as they clawed the air. He actually sweat so the drops fell on the floor. Bime-by we let him down, and he was awfully relieved, though his feet were not more than two inches from the floor any of the time. We were just going to slip Pa down a board with slivers in to give him a realizing sense of the rough road a reformed man has to travel, and got him straddle of the board, when the dutchman came home from the dance, fullern a goose, and he drove us boys out, and we left Pa, and the dutchman said, 'Vot you vas doing here mit dose boys, you old duffer, and vere vas your pants?' and Pa pulled off the handkerchief from his eyes, and the dutchman said if he didn't get out in a holy minute he would kick the stuffing out of him, and Pa got out. He took his pants and put them on in the alley, and then we come up to Pa and told him that was the third time the drunken dutchman had broke up our Lodge, but we should keep on doing good until we had reformed every drunkard in Milwaukee, and Pa said that was

right, and he would see us through if it cost every dollar he had. Then we took him home, and when Ma asked if she couldn't join the Lodge too, Pa said, 'Now you take my advice, and don't you ever join no Good Templars. Your system could not stand the racket. Say, I want you to put some cold cream on my back.' I think Pa will be a different man now, don't you?"

The grocery man said if he was that boy's pa for fifteen minutes he would be a different boy, or there would be a funeral, and the boy took a handful of soft-shelled almonds and a few layer raisins and skipped out.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HIS PA'S MARVELOUS ESCAPE.

THE GROCERY MAN HAS NO VASELINE—THE OLD MAN PROVIDES THREE FIRE ESCAPES—ONE OF THE ESCAPES TESTED—HIS PA SCANDALIZES THE CHURCH—"SHE'S A DARLING!"—WORLDLY MUSIC IN THE COURTS OF ZION.

"Got any vaseline," said the bad boy to the grocery man, as he went into the store one cold morning, leaving the door open, and picked up a cigar stub that had been thrown down near the stove, and began to smoke it.

"Shut the door, dum you. Was you brought up in a saw mill? You'll freeze every potato in the house. No, I haven't got vaseline. What do you want of vaseline?" said the grocery man, as he set the syrup keg on a chair by the stove where it would thaw out.

"Want to rub it on Pa's legs," said the boy, as he tried to draw smoke through the cigar stub.

"What is the matter with your Pa's legs? Rheumatiz?"

"Wuss nor rheumatiz," said the boy, as he threw away the cigar stub and drew some cider in a broken tea cup. "Pa has got the worst looking hind legs you

ever saw. You see, since there has been so many fires Pa has got offul scared, and he has bought three fire escapes, made out of rope with knots in them, and he has been telling us every day how he could rescue the whole family in case of fire. He told us to keep cool, whatever happened, and to rely on him. If the house got on fire we were all to rush to Pa, and he would save us. Well, last night Ma had to go to one of the neighbors, where they was going to have twins, and we didn't sleep much, cause Ma had to come home twice in the night to get saffron, and an old flannel petticoat that I broke in when I was a kid, cause the people where Ma went did not know as twins was on the bill of fare, and they only had flannel petticoats for one. Pa was cross at being kept awake, and told Ma he hoped when all the children in Milwaukee were born, and got grown up, she would take in her sign and not go around nights and act as usher to baby matinees. Pa says there ought to be a law that babies should arrive on the regular day trains, and not wait for the midnight express. Well, Pa he got asleep, and he slept till about eight o'clock in the morning, and the blinds were closed, and it was dark in his room, and I had to wait for my breakfast till I was hungry as a wolf, and the girl told me to wake Pa up, so I went up stairs, and I don't know what made me think of it, but I had some of this powder they make red fire with in the theatre, that me and my chum had the 4th of July, and I put it in a washdish in the bath-room, and I touched it off and hollered fire. I

HIS PA'S FIRE ESCAPE.

was going to wake Pa up and tell him it was all right, and laugh at him. I guess there was too much fire, or I yelled too loud, cause Pa jumped out of bed and grabbed a rope and rushed through the hall towards the back window, that goes out on a shed. I tried to say something, but Pa ran over me and told me to save myself, and I got to the back window to tell him there was no fire just as he let himself out the window He had one end of the rope tied to the leg of the washstand, and he was climbing down the back side of the shed by the kitchen, with nothing on but his nightshirt, and he was the horriblest looking object ever was, with his legs flying and trying to stick his toenails into the rope and the side of the house. I don't think a man looks well in society with nothing on but his night-shirt. I didn't blame the hired girls for being scared when they saw Pa and his legs coming down outside the window, and when they yelled I went down to the kitchen, and they said a crazy man with no clothes but a pillow slip around his neck was trying to kick the window in, and they run into the parlor, and I opened the door and let Pa in the kitchen. He asked me if anybody else was saved, and then I told him there was no fire, and he must have dreamed he was in hell, or somewhere. Well, Pa was astonished, and said he must be wrong in the head, and I left him thawing himself by the stove while I went after his pants, and his legs were badly chilled, but I guess nothin' was froze. He lays it all to Ma, and says if she would stay at home

and let people run their own baby shows, there would be more comfort in the house. Ma came in with a shawl over her head, and a bowl full of something that smelled frowy, and after she had told us what the result of her visit was, she sent me after vaseline to rub Pa's legs. Pa says that he has demonstrated that if a man is cool and collected, in case of fire, and goes deliberately at work to save himself, he will come out all right."

"Well, you are the meanest boy I ever heard of," said the grocery man. "But what about your Pa's dancing a clog dance in church Sunday? The minister's hired girl was in here after some codfish yesterday morning, and she said the minister said your Pa had scandalized the church the worst way."

"O, he didn't dance in church. He was a little excited, that's all. You see, Pa chews tobacco, and it is pretty hard on him to sit all through a sermon without taking a chew, and he gets nervous. He always reaches around in his pistol pocket, when they stand up to sing the last time, and feels in his tobacco box and gets out a chew, and puts it in his mouth when the minister pronounces the benediction, and then when they get out doors he is all ready to spit. He always does that. Well, my chum had a present, on Christmas, of a music box, just about as big as Pa's tobacco box, and all you have to do is to touch a spring and it plays, 'She's a Daisy, She's a Dumpling.' I borrowed it and put it in Pa's pistol pocket, where he keeps his tobacco box, and when the choir got most through singing Pa reached

his hand in his pocket and began to fumble around for a chew. He touched the spring, and just as everybody bowed their heads to receive the benediction, and it was so still you could hear a gum drop, the music box began to play, and in the stillness it sounded as loud as a church organ. Well, I thought Ma would sink. The minister heard it, and everybody looked at Pa, too, and Pa turned red, and the music box kept up, 'She's a Daisy,' and the minister looked mad and said 'Amen,' and the people began to put on their coats, and the minister told the deacon to hunt up the source of that worldly music, and they took Pa into the room back of the pulpit and searched him, and Ma says Pa will have to be churched. They kept the music box, and I have got to carry in coal to get money enough to buy my chum a new music box. Well, I shall have to go and get that vaseline or Pa's legs will suffer. Good day."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HIS PA JOKES HIM.

THE BAD BOY CAUGHT AT LAST—HOW TO GROW A MOUSTACHE—TAR AND CAYENNE PEPPER—THE GROCERYMAN'S FATE IS SEALED—FATHER AND SON JOIN IN A PRACTICAL JOKE—SOFT SOAP ON THE STEPS—DOWN FALL OF MINISTERS AND DEACONS—MA TO THE RESCUE!—THE BAD BOY GETS EVEN WITH HIS PA.

"WHAT on earth is that you have got on your upper lip?" said the grocery man to the bad boy, as he came in and began to peel a rutabaga, and his upper lip hung down over his teeth, and was covered with something that looked like shoemaker's wax, "You look as though you had been digging potatoes with your nose."

"O, that is some of Pa's darn smartness. I asked him if he knew anything that would make a boy's moustache grow, and he told me the best thing he ever tried was tar, and for me to rub it on thick when I went to bed, and wash it off in the morning. I put it on last night, and by gosh I can't wash it off. Pa told me all I had to do was to use a scouring brick, and it would come off, and I used the

brick, and it took the skin off, and the tar is there yet, and say, does my lip look very bad ?

The grocery man told him it was the worst looking lip he ever saw, but he could cure it by rubbing a little cayenne pepper in the tar. He said the tar would neutralize the pepper, and the pepper would loosen the tar, and act as a cooling lotion to the lacerated lip. The boy went to a can of pepper behind the counter, and stuck his finger in and rubbed a lot of it on his lip, and then his hair began to raise, and he began to cry, and rushed to the water-pail and ran his face into the water to wash off the pepper. The grocery man laughed, and when the boy had got the pepper washed off, and had resumed his rutabaga, he said :

"That seals your fate. No man ever trifles with the feelings of the bold buccanner of the Spanish main, without living to rue it. I will lay for you, old man, and don't you forget it. Pa thought he was smart when he got me to put tar on my lip, to bring my moustache out, and to-day he lays on a bed of pain, and to-morrow your turn will come. You will regret that you did not get down on your knees and beg my pardon. You will be sorry that you did not prescribe cold cream for my bruised lip, instead of cayenne pepper. Beware, you base twelve ounces to the pound huckster, you gimlet-eyed seller of dog sausage, you sanded sugar idiot, you small potato three card monte sleight of hand rotton egg fiend, you villian that sells smoked

sturgeon and dogfish for smoked halibut. The avenger is on your track."

"Look here, young man, don't you threaten me, or I will take you by the ear and walk you through green fields, and beside still waters, to the front door, and kick your pistol pocket clear around so you can wear it for a watch pocket in your vest. No boy can frighten me by crimus. But tell me, how did you get even with your Pa?"

"Well, give me a glass of cider and we will be friends and I will tell you. Thanks! Gosh, but that cider is made out of mouldy dried apples and sewer water," and he took a handful of layer raisins off the top of a box to take the taste out of his mouth, and while the grocer charged a peck of rutabagas, a gallon of cider and two pounds of raisins to the boy's Pa, the boy proceeded: "You see, Pa likes a joke the best of anybody you ever saw, if it is on somebody else, but he kicks like a steer when it is on him. I asked him this morning if it wouldn't be a good joke to put some soft soap on the front step, so the letter carrier would slip up and spill hisself, and Pa said it would be elegant. Pa is a Democrat, and he thinks that anything that will make it unpleasant for Republican office holders, is legitimate, and he encouraged me to paralyze the letter-carrier. The letter-carrier is as old a man as Pa, and I didn't want to humiliate him, but I just wanted Pa to give his consent, so he couldn't kick if he got caught in his own trap. You see? Well, this morning the minister and two of the deacons called

on Pa, to have a talk with him about his actions in church, on two or three occasions, when he pulled out the pack of cards with his handkerchief, and played the music box, and they had a pretty hot time in the back parlor, and finally they settled it, and were going to sing a hymn, when Pa handed them a little hymn book, and the minister opened it and turned pale and said, 'what's this?' and they looked at it, and it was a book of Hoyle's games instead of a hymn book. Gosh, wasn't the minister mad! He had started to read a hymn and he quit after he read two lines where it said, 'In a game of four-handed euchre, never trump your partner's ace, but rely on the ace to take the trick on suit.' Pa was trying to explain how the book came to be there, when the minister and the deacons started out, and then I poured the two quart tin pail full of soft soap on the front step. It was this white soap, just the color of the step, and when I got it spread I went down in the basement. The visitors came out and Pa was trying to explain to them, about Hoyle, when one of the deacons stepped in the soap, and his feet flew up and he struck on his pants and slid down the steps. The minister said 'great heavens, deacon, are you hurt? let me assist you,' and he took two quick steps, and you have seen these fellows in a nigger show that kick each other head over heels and fall on their ears, and stand on their heads and turn around like a top. The minister's feet slipped and the next I saw he was standing on his head in his hat, and his legs were sort of wilted

and fell limp by his side, and he fell over on his stomach. You talk about spreading the gospel in heathen lands. It is nothing to the way you can spread it with two quarts of soft soap. The minister didn't look pious a bit, when he was trying to catch the railing he looked as though he wanted to murder every man on earth, but it may be he was tired.

"Well, Pa was paralyzed, and he and the other deacon rushed out to pick up the minister and the first old man, and when they struck the step they went kiting. Pa's feet somehow slipped backwards, and he turned a summersault and struck full length on his back, and one heel was across the minister's neck, and he slid down the steps, and the other deacon fell all over the other three, and Pa swore at them, and it was the worst looking lot of pious people I ever saw. I think if the minister had been in the woods somewhere, where nobody could have heard him, he would have used language. They all seemed mad at each other. The hired girl told Ma there was three tramps out on the sidewalk fighting Pa, and Ma she took the broom and started to help Pa, and I tried to stop Ma, 'cause her constitution is not very strong and I didn't want her to do any flying trapeze bizness, but I couldn't stop her, and she went out with the broom and a towel tied around her head. Well, I don't know where Ma did strike, but when she came in she said she had palpitation of the heart, but that was not the place where she put the arnica. O, but she *did* go through the air like a bullet

through cheese, and when she went down the steps a bumpity-bump, I felt sorry for Ma. The minister had got so he could set up on the sidewalk, with his back against the lower step, when Ma came sliding down, and one of the heels of her gaiters hit the minister in the hair, and the other foot went right through between his arm and his side, and the broom like to pushed his teeth down his throat. But he was not mad at Ma. As soon as he see it was Ma he said, 'Why, sister, the wicked stand in slippery places, don't they?' and Ma she was mad and said for him to let go her stocking, and then Pa was mad and he said, 'look-a-here you sky-pilot, this thing has gone far enough,' and then a policeman came along and first he thought they were all drunk, but he found they were respectable, and he got a chip and scraped the soap off of them, and they went home, and Pa and Ma they got in the house some way, and just then the letter-carrier came along, but he didn't have any letters for us, and he didn't come onto the steps, and then I went up stairs and I said, 'Pa, don't you think it is real mean, after you and I fixed the soap on the steps for the letter-carrier, he didn't come on the step at all,' and Pa was scraping the soap off his pants with a piece of shingle, and the hired girl was putting liniment on Ma, and heating it in for palpitation of the heart, and Pa said, 'You dam idjut, no more of this, or I'll maul the liver out of you,' and I asked him if he didn't think soft soap would help a moustache to grow, and he picked up Ma's work-basket and threw it at my head, as I went

down stairs, and I came over him. Don't you think my Pa is unreasonable to get mad at a little joke that he planned himself ?"

The grocery man said he didn't know, and the boy went out with a pair of skates over his shoulder, and the grocery man is wondering what joke the boy will play on him to get even for the cayenne pepper.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HIS PA GETS MAD!

A BOOM IN COURT-PLASTER—THE BAD BOY DECLINES BEING MAULED!—THE OLD MAN GETS A HOT BOX —THE BAD BOY BORROWS A CAT!—THE BATTLE!—"HELEN BLAZES"—THE CAT VICTORIOUS!—THE BAD BOY DRAWS THE LINE AT KINDLING WOOD!

"I WAS down to the drug store this morning, and saw your Ma buying a lot of court-plaster, enough to make a shirt, I should think. What's she doing with so much court-plaster?" asked the grocery man of the bad boy, as he came in and pulled off his boots by the stove and emptied out a lot of snow, that had collected as he walked through a drift, which melted and made a bad smell.

"O, I guess she is going to patch Pa up so he will hold water. Pa's temper got him into the worst muss you ever see, last night. If that museum was here now they would hire Pa and exhibit him as the tattooed man. I tell you, I have got too old to be mauled as though I was a kid, and any man who attacks me from this out, wants to have his peace made with the insurance companies, and know that his calling and election is sure, because I am a bad

man, and don't you forget it." And the boy pulled on his boots and looked so cross and desperate that the grocery man asked him if he wouldn't try a little new cider.

"Good heavens!" said the grocery man, as the boy swallowed the cider, and his face resumed its natural look, and the piratical frown disappeared with the cider. "You have not stabbed your father, have you? I have feared that one thing would bring on another, with you, and that you would yet be hung."

"Naw, I haven't stabbed him. It was another cat that stabbed him. You see, Pa wants me to do all the work around the house. The other day he bought a load of kindling wood, and told me to carry it into the basement. I have not been educated up to kindling wood, and I didn't do it. When supper time came, and Pa found that I had not carried in the kindling wood, he had a hot box, and he told me if that wood was not in when he came back from the lodge, that he would warm my jacket. Well, I tried to hire some one to carry it in, and got a man to promise to come in the morning and carry it in and take his pay in groceries, and I was going to buy the groceries here and have them charged to Pa. But that wouldn't help me out that night. I knew when Pa came home he would search for me. So I slept in the back hall on a cot. But I didn't want Pa to have all his trouble for nothing, so I borrowed an old tom cat that my chum's old maid aunt owns, and put the cat in my bed. I thought if Pa

came in my room after me, and found that by his unkindness I had changed to a tom cat, he would be sorry. That is the biggest cat you ever see, and the worst fighter in our ward. It isn't afraid of anything, and can whip a New Foundland dog quicker than you could put sand in a barrel of sugar. Well, about eleven o'clock I heard Pa tumble over the kindling wood, and I knew by the remark he made, as the wood slid around under him, that there was going to be a cat fight real quick. He come up to Ma's room, and sounded Ma as to whether Hennery had retired to his virtuous couch. Pa is awful sarcastic when he tries to be. I could hear him take off his clothes, and hear him say, as he picked up a trunk strap, 'I guess I will go up to his room and watch the smile on his face, as he dreams of angels. I yearn to press him to my aching bosom. I thought to myself, mebbe you won't yearn so much directly. He come up stairs, and I could hear him breathing hard. I looked around the corner and could see he just had on his shirt and pants, and his suspenders were hanging down, and his bald head shone like a calcium light just before it explodes. Pa went in my room, and up to the bed, and I could hear him say, 'Come out here and bring in that kindling wood, or I will start a fire on your base-burner with this strap.' And then there was a yowling such as I never heard before, and Pa said, 'Helen Blazes,' and the furniture in my room began to fall around and break. O, *my!* I think Pa took the tom cat right by the neck, the way he does me, and

that left all the cat's feet free to get in their work. By the way the cat squawled as though it was being choked, I know Pa had him by the neck. I suppose the cat thought Pa was a whole flock of New Foundland dogs, and the cat had a record on dogs, and it kicked awful. Pa's shirt was no protection at all in a cat fight, and the cat just walked all around Pa's stomach, and Pa yelled 'police,' and 'fire,' and 'turn on the hose,' and he called Ma, and the cat yowled. If Pa had had the presence of mind enough to have dropped the cat, or rolled it up in the mattrass, it would have been all right, but a man always gets rattled in time of danger, and he held onto the cat and started down stairs yelling murder, and he met Ma coming up.

I guess Ma's night-cap, or something, frightened the cat some more, cause he stabbed Ma on the night-shirt with one hind foot, and Ma said 'mercy on us,' and she went back, and Pa stumbled on a hand-sled that was on the stairs, and they all fell down, and the cat got away and went down in the coal bin and yowled all night. Pa and Ma went into their room, and I guess they anointed themselves with vasaline, and Pond's extract, and I went and got into my bed, cause it was cold out in the hall, and the cat had warmed my bed as well as it had warmed Pa. It was all I could do to go to sleep, with Pa and Ma talking all night, and this morning I came down the back stairs, and havn't been to breakfast, cause I don't want to see Pa when he is vexed. You let the man that carries in the kind-

ling wood have six shillings worth of groceries, and charge them to Pa. I have passed the kindling wood period in a boy's life, and have arrived at the coal period. I will carry in coal, but I draw the line at kindling wood.

"Well, you are a cruel, bad boy," said the grocery man, as he went to the book and charged the six shillings.

"O, I don't know. I think Pa is cruel. A man who will take a poor kitty by the neck, that hasn't done any harm, and tries to chastise the poor thing with a trunk strap, ought to be looked after by the humane society. And if it is cruel to take a cat by the neck, how much more cruel is it to take a boy by the neck, that had diphtheria only a few years ago, and whose throat is tender. Say, I guess I will accept your invitation to take breakfast with you," and the boy cut off a piece of bologna and helped himself to the crackers, and while the grocery man was out shoveling off the snow from the sidewalk, the boy filled his pockets with raisins and loaf sugar, and then went out to watch the man carry in his kindling wood.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HIS PA AN INVENTOR.

THE BAD BOY A MARTYR—THE DOG-COLLAR IN THE SAUSAGE—A PATENT STOVE—THE PATENT TESTED!—HIS PA A BURNT OFFERING—EARLY BREAKFAST!

"HA! HA! Now I have got you," said the grocery man to the bad boy, the other morning, as he came in and jumped upon the counter and tied the end of a ball of twine to the tail of a dog, and "sicked" the dog on another dog that was following a passing sleigh, causing the twine to pay out until the whole ball was scattered along the block. "Condemn you, I've a notion to choke the liver out of you. Who tied that twine to the dog's tail?"

The boy choked up with emotion, and the tears came into his eyes, and he said he didn't know anything about the twine or the dog. He said he noticed the dog come in, and wag his tail around the twine, but he supposed the dog was a friend of the family, and did not disturb him. "Everybody lays everything that is done to me," said the boy, as he put his handkerchief to his nose, "and they will be sorry for it when I die. I have a good notion to poison myself by eating some of your glucose sugar."

"Yes, and you do about everything that is mean. The other day a lady came in and told me to send up to her house some of my country sausage, done up in muslin bags, and while she was examining it she noticed something hard inside the bags, and asked me what it was, and I opened it, and I hope to die if there wasn't a little brass pad-lock and a piece of a red morocco dog collar imbedded in the sausage. Now how do you suppose that got in there?" and the grocery man looked savage.

The boy looked interested, and put on an expression as though in deep thought, and finally said, "I suppose the farmer that put up the sausage did not strain the dog meat. Sausage meat ought to be strained."

The grocery man pulled in about half a block of twine, after the dog had run against a fence and broke it, and told the boy he knew perfectly well how the brass pad-lock came to be in the sausage, but thinking it was safer to have the good will of the boy than the ill will, he offered him a handfull of prunes.

"No," says the boy, "I have swore off on mouldy prunes. I am no kinder-garten any more. For years I have eaten rotten peaches around this store, and everything you couldn't sell, but I have turned over a new leaf now, and after this nothing is too good for me. Since Pa has got to be an inventor, we are going to live high."

"What's your Pa invented? I saw a hearse and

three hacks go up on your street the other day, and I thought may be you had killed your Pa."

"Not much. There will be more than three hacks when I kill Pa, and don't you forget it. Well, sir, Pa has struck a fortune, if he can make the thing work. He has got an idea about coal stoves that will bring him several million dollars, if he gets a royalty of five dollars on every cook stove in the world. His idea is to have a coal stove on castors with the pipe made to telescope out and in, and rubber hose for one joint, so you can pull the stove all around the room and warm any particular place. Well, sir, to hear Pa tell about it, you would think it would revolutionize the country, and maybe it will when he gets it perfected, but he came near burning the house up, and scared us half to death this morning, and burned his shirt off, and he is all covered with cotton with sweet oil on, and he smells like salad dressing.

"You see Pa had a pipe made and some castors put on our coal stove, and he tied a rope to the hearth of the stove, and had me put in some kindling wood and coal last night, so he could draw the stove up to the bed and light the fire without getting up. Ma told him he would put his foot in it, and he told her to dry up, and let him run the stove business. He said it took a man with brain to run a patent right, and Ma she pulled the clothes over her head and let Pa do the fire act. She has been building the fires for twenty years, and thought she would let Pa see how good it was. Well, Pa pulled

the stove to the bed, and touched off the kindling wood. I guess maybe I got a bundle of kindling wood that the hired girl had put kerosene on, cause it blazed up awful and smoked, and the blaze bursted out the doors and windows of the stove, and Pa yelled fire, and I jumped out of bed and rushed in and he was the scartest man you ever see, and you'd a dide to see how he kicked when I threw a pail of water on his legs and put his shirt out. Ma did not get burned, but she was pretty wet, and she told Pa she would pay the five dollars royalty on that stove and take the castors off and let it remain stationary. Pa says he will make it work if he burns the house down. I think it was real mean in Pa to get mad at me because I threw cold water on him instead of warm water, to put his shirt out. If I had waited till I could heat water to the right temperature I would have been an orphan and Pa would have been a burnt offering. But some men always kick at everything. Pa has given up business entirely and says he shall devote the remainder of his life curing himself of the different troubles that I get him into. He has retained a doctor by the year, and he buys liniment by the gallon."

"What was it about your folks getting up in the middle of the night to eat? The hired girl was over here after some soap the other morning, and she said she was going to leave your house."

"Well, that was a picnic. Pa said he wanted breakfast earlier than we was in the habit of having

it, and he said I might see to it that the house was awake early enough. The other night I awoke with the awfulest pain you ever heard of. It was that night that you give me and my chum the bottle of pickled oysters that had begun to work. Well, I couldn't sleep, and I thought I would call the hired girls, and they got up and got breakfast to going, and then I rapped on Pa and Ma's door and told them the breakfast was getting cold, and they got up and came down. We eat breakfast by gas light, and Pa yawned and said it made a man feel good to get up and get ready for work before daylight, the way he used to on the farm, and Ma she yawned and agreed with Pa, 'cause she has to, or have a row. After breakfast we sat around for an hour, and Pa said it was a long time getting daylight, and bimeby Pa looked at his watch. When he began to pull out his watch I lit out and hid in the store-room, and pretty soon I heard Pa and Ma come up stairs and go to bed, and then the hired girls, they went to bed, and when it was all still, and the pain had stopped inside of my clothes, I went to bed, and I looked to see what time it was and it was two o'clock in the morning. We got dinner at eight o'clock in the morning, and Pa said he guessed he would call up the house after this, so I have lost another job, and it was all on account of that bottle of pickled oysters you gave me. My chum says he had colic too, but he didn't call up his folks. It was all he could do to get up hisself. Why don't you sometimes give away something that is not spiled?"

The grocery man said he guessed he knew what to give away, and the boy went out and hung up a sign in front of the grocery, that he had made on wrapping paper with red chalk, which read, "Rotten eggs, good enough for custard pies, for 18 cents a dozen."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HIS PA GETS BOXED.

A PARROT FOR SALE—THE OLD MAN IS DOWN ON THE GROCER—"A CONTRITE HEART BEATS A BOB-TAIL FLUSH!"—POLLY'S RESPONSES—CAN A PARROT GO TO HELL?—THE OLD MAN GETS ANOTHER BLACK EYE—DUFFY HITS FOR KEEPS—NOTHING LIKE AN OYSTER FOR A BLACK EYE.

"You don't want to buy a good parrot, do you," said the bad boy to the grocery man, as he put his wet mittens on the top of the stove to dry, and kept his back to the stove so he could watch the grocery man, and be prepared for a kick, if the man should remember the rotten egg sign that the boy put up in front of the grocery, last week.

"Naw, I don't want no parrot. I had rather have a fool boy around than a parrot. But what's the matter with your Ma's parrot? I thought she wouldn't part with him for anything."

"Well, she wouldn't until Wednesday night; but now she says she will not have him around, and I may have half I can get for him. She told me to go to some saloon, or some disreputable place and sell him, and I thought maybe he would about suit you," and the boy broke into a bunch of celery, and

took out a few tender stalks and rubbed them on a codfish, to salt them, and began to bite the stalks, while he held the sole of one wet boot up against the stove to dry it, making a smell of burned leather that came near turning the stomach of the cigar sign.

"Look-a-here, boy, don't you call this a disreputable place. Some of the best people in this town come here," said the grocery man, as he held up the cheese-knife and grated his teeth as though he would like to jab it into the youth.

"O, that's all right, they come here 'cause you trust; but you make up what you lose by charging it to other people. Pa will make it hot for you the last of the week. He has been looking over your bill, and comparing it with the hired girl, and she says we haven't ever had a prune, or a dried apple, or a raisin, or any cinnamon, or crackers and cheese out of your store, and he says you are worse than the James Brothers, and that you used to be a three card monte man; and he will have you arrested for highway robbery, but you can settle that with Pa. I like you, because you are no ordinary sneak thief. You are a high-toned, gentlemanly sort of a bilk, and wouldn't take anything you couldn't lift. O, keep your seat, and don't get excited. It does a man good to hear the truth from one who has got the nerve to tell it.

"But about the parrot. Ma has been away from home for a week, having a high old time in Chicago, going to theatres and things, and while she was

gone, I guess the hired girl or somebody learned the parrot some new things to say. A parrot that can only say 'Polly wants a cracker,' dont amount to anything—what we need is new style parrots that can converse on the topics of the day, and say things original. Well, when Ma got back, I guess her conscience hurt her for the way she had been carrying on in Chicago, and so when she heard the basement of the church was being frescoed, she invited the committee to hold the Wednesday evening prayer meeting at our house. First, there were four people came, and Ma asked Pa to stay to make up a quorum, and Pa said seeing he had two pair, he guessed he would stay in, and if Ma would deal him a queen he would have a full hand. I don't know what Pa meant; bnt he plays draw poker sometimes. Anyway, there was eleven people came, including the minister, and after they had talked about the neighbors a spell, and Ma had showed the women a new tidy she had worked for the heathen, with a motto on it which Pa had taught her: 'A contrite heart beats a bob-tailed flush,'—and Pa had talked to the men about a religious silver mine he was selling stock in, which he advised them as a friend to buy for the glory of the church, they all went in the back parlor, and the minister led in prayer. He got down on his knees right under the parrot's cage, and you'd a dide to see Polly hang on to the wires of the cage with one foot, and drop an apple core on the minister's head. Ma shook her handkerchief at Polly, and looked sassy,

and Polly got up on the perch, and as the minister got warmed up, and began to raise the roof, Polly said, 'O, dry up.' The minister had his eyes shut, but he opened one of them a little and looked at Pa. Pa was tickled at the parrot, but when the minister looked at Pa as though it was him that was making irreverent remarks, Pa was mad.

"The minister got to the 'Amen,' and Polly shook hisself and said 'What you giving us?' and the minister got up and brushed the bird seed off his knees, and he looked mad. I thought Ma would sink with mortification, and I was sitting on a piano stool, looking as pious as a Sunday school superintendent the Sunday before he skips out with the bank's funds; and Ma looked at me as though she thought it was me that had been tampering with the parrot. Gosh, I never said a word to that parrot, and I can prove it by my chum.

"Well, the minister asked one of the sisters if she wouldn't pray, and she wasn't engaged, so she said with pleasure, and she kneeled down, but she corked herself, 'cause she got one knee on a cast iron dumb bell that I had been practising with. She said 'O my,' in a disgusted sort of a way, and then she began to pray for the reformation of the youth of the land, and asked for the spirit to descend on the household, and particularly on the boy that was such a care and anxiety to his parents, and just then Polly said, 'O, pull down your vest.' Well, you'd a dide to see that woman look at me. The parrot cage was partly behind the window curtain,

and they couldn't see it, and she thought it was me. She looked at Ma as though she was wondering why she didn't hit me with a poker, but she went on, and Polly said, 'wipe off your chin,' and then the lady got through and got up, and told Ma it must be a great trial to have an idiotic child; and then Ma she was mad and said it wasn't half so bad as it was to be a kleptomaniac, and then the woman got up and said she wouldn't stay no longer, and Pa said to me to take that parrot out doors, and that seemed to make them all good natured again. Ma said to take the parrot and give it to the poor. I took the cage and pointed my finger at the parrot and it looked at the woman and said 'old catamaran,' and the woman tried to look pious and resigned, but she couldn't. As I was going out the door the parrot ruffed up his feathers and said 'Dammit, set em up,' and I hurried out with the cage for fear he would say something bad, and the folks all held up their hands and said it was scandalous. Say, I wonder if a parrot can go to hell with the rest of the community. Well, I put the parrot in the woodshed, and after they all had their innings, except Pa, who acted as umpire, the meeting broke up, and Ma says its the last time she will have that gang at her house.

"That must have been where your Pa got his black eye," said the grocery man, as he charged the bunch of celery to the boy's Pa. "Did the minister hit him, or was it one of the sisters?"

"O, he didn't get his black eye at prayer meeting!" said the boy, as he took his mittens off the

stove and rubbed them to take the stiffening out. "It was from boxing. Pa told my chum and me that it was no harm to learn to box, cause we could defend ourselves, and he said he used to be a holy terror with the boxing gloves when he was a boy, and he has been giving us lessons. Well, he is no slouch, now I tell you, and handles himself pretty well for a church member. I read in the paper how Zack Chandler played it on Conkling by getting Jem Mace, the prize fighter, to knock him silly, and I asked Pa if he wouldn't let me bring a poor boy who had no father to teach him boxing, to our house to learn to box, and Pa said certainly, fetch him along. He said he would be glad to do anything for a poor orphan. So I went down in the Third ward and got an Irish boy by the name of Duffy, who can knock the socks off of any boy in the ward. He fit a prize fight once. It would have made you laugh to see Pa telling him how to hold his hands and how to guard his face. He told Duffy not to be afraid, but strike right out and hit for keeps. Duffy said he was afraid Pa wonld get mad if he hit him, and Pa said, 'nousense, boy, knock me down if you can, and I will laugh ha! ha!' Well, Duffy he hauled back and gave Pa one in the nose and another in both eyes, and cuffed him on the ear and punched him in the stomach, and lammed him in the mouth and made his teeth bleed, and then he gave him a side-winder in both eyes, and Pa pulled off the boxing gloves and grabbed a chair, and we adjourned and went down stairs as though there was

a panic. I haven't seen Pa since. Was his eye very black?"

"Black, I should say so," said the grocery man. "And his nose seemed to be trying to look into his left ear. He was at the market buying beefsteak to put on it."

"O, beefsteak is no account. I must go and see him and tell him that an oyster is the best thing for a black eye. Well, I must go. A boy has a pretty hard time running a house the way it should be run," and the boy went out and hung up a sign in front of the grocery: "*Frowy Butter a Speshulty.*"

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This is to caution you and put you on your guard against the News Dealer on this train. He is a bold, designing person, who has a purpose. All of the oranges, and bananas, and vegetable ivory that he fires down your neck is for the purpose of getting your mind in shape, so can perpetrate on you the crowning act. When he gets your system in a condition such as he desires, he will offer you a book called "Peck's Sunshine," and you will be so powerless to protect yourself that you will buy it. Then your troubles will commence. There is something about that book that will claim your attention and cause you to laugh out in meeting. You will strike something in it that will make you forget what station you want to get off at, and you are liable to be carried beyond your destination, and have to walk back. The book is full of trichinæ, and people have read only to go home and send for a doctor, after it was everlastingly too late. The reading of the book seems to have a bad effect on every body. Fun is a good thing in place, but where it causes brother to rise up against brother, too much care cannot be exercised. I know of one young woman who had always led a different life. She was an exemplary Christian, and never missed a church sociable, or a Sunday school picnic. Her voice was always heard in the choir and the sewing society. A man, little dreaming of the result, presented her with a copy of "Peck's Sunshine." She read it, and her whole being seemed to undergo a change. In less than a month she was married to the young man. I mention this as a terrible example. I am anxious to get the book off the market, so I can write another of a more pious nature The sale of this book has been so large that I fear much damage has been done, and I ask that you beware of the designing young man who offers to sell you the book, but if you insist on heaping coals of fire on my head, buy it, but be careful and not sit in a draft of air when you read it. That was what gave Henry Ward Beecher the hay fever. I am so anxious to stop the sale of the book that I will give a chromo to all who do not buy it.

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"I am sunstruck."—JAMES G. BLAINE.

"I now believe there is a hell."—R. G. INGERSOLL. (It is evident from the above expression of Mr. Ingersoll that he had read the book.)

"A straight flush beats three of a kind."—CHARLES V. FARWELL.

"You bet your life."—JOHN A. LOGAN.

"I would not live always."—PETER COOPER.

"Give me liberty or give me death."—PATRICK HENRY.

"No thank you, I never drink. Or, by the way, have you any crab-apple juice handy?"—R. B. HAYES.

"Keno!"—MICHAEL MCDONALD.

We might go on indefinitely giving expressions of great men who have read the book, but life is too short. Read it, and if you have got a soul, and most persons who travel on railroads have, more or less, your heart will expand, and you will feel like giving to the poor, ministering to the distressed, and your face will lose its corrugations that time has planted there, and you will feel younger and more kitteny.

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I desire, in this connection, to thank those who purchased the former library of song concocted by me, thus enabling the publishers and myself to live in our present style of oriental pomp and princely magnificence. From the royalty received on the first volume of the series, I have gathered a rich harvest. I have moved into a larger residence, where I pay the rent, instead of changing my location each month as formerly. As another evidence of my emancipation from abject poverty, I will state that I have reduced my collection of dogs to one cream-colored pet, in whose veins flows the blood of every known variety of dog of which history informs us.

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